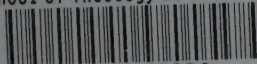
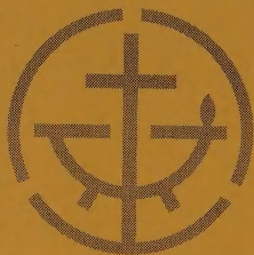


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PACIFIST INFORMATION CENTE

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INTO THE WAY OF PEACE

INTO THE WAY OF PEACE

By

COMMUNICANTS OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH

Edited by

PERCY HARTILL

Archdeacon of Stoke-on-Trent

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INTRODUCTION

It is obvious to everyone that a great war raises acute problems—personal and social, economic and political, moral and spiritual—which require the most careful and dispassionate thought. It is no less obvious that in war-time most people are by their circumstances gravely hampered in such thinking; many find all their time and energy taken up by practical activities of their immediate tasks, either in the fighting services or on the home front, and all are to some extent affected by the increased mental and nervous strain of living under war conditions; and it is very hard to stand apart from one's environment and try to gain the detachment which is needed for clear thought. Pacifists are precluded by their convictions from taking part in some of the activities which occupy their fellows; and in some cases their co-operation is not welcomed even where they are willing and able to give it. It would be easy in such circumstances for them to withdraw into some cave of Adullam, as men with a grievance—easy, but quite un-Christian. They ought rather to feel that their comparative detachment imposes on them a special responsibility of contributing to the thought of their country and of the world.

3-2-59
L. V. D. F.
It was with this aim in view that the project of this book was first conceived by the Executive Committee of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, which consists of Anglican Communicants who, believing that their membership of the Christian Church involves the repudiation of modern war, pledge themselves to take no part in war, and to work for the construction of Christian peace in the world. All the essays are written by members or sympathizers of the Fellowship, and some of them were read as papers at a conference held in August, 1940. But the Fellowship accepts no responsibility for the opinions expressed: indeed, the appended note to Fr. Lockhart's paper adopts a position which in some respects the Fellowship has rejected. Nor is any

contributor responsible for the opinions of any other. We have no desire to be people who think in one stereotyped way. But the reader will discern a common spirit running through the book. We deeply regret that one of the writers—Miss Natalie Victor—passed away before the book was published: indeed, she wrote her essay with great effort in the closing stages of her illness.

We offer the book—especially to our fellow-Churchmen—as a small positive contribution to Christian thinking. Our standpoint is often misunderstood. For example, the *Church Times* for November 22, 1940, attributes to pacifists the “presumption that all men and all nations are equally right and equally wrong”—a misrepresentation so absurd as to need no refutation. Many people seem not to have recognized that Christian pacifism does not involve a Tolstoyan repudiation of any use of force. Thus the chapter on Christian pacifism in Mr. John Lewis’ *The Case Against Pacifism*, practically assumes that all Christian pacifists are Tolstoyans; but perhaps this misunderstanding is hardly surprising in a writer who seems to believe that Soviet Russia is always in the right. But it is more surprising to find the Bishop of Chichester trying to refute the view “that it is utterly wrong for a Christian to take part in war” by saying that “It is a difficult position to justify in the world as it is. For it is not possible to conduct the daily business of the world except by the use and discipline of some kind of force. To refuse to use force absolutely is logically, surely, to be anarchic!”¹ Dr. Bell has shown an unusual degree of sympathy with pacifists, and not once nor twice have we been grateful for his magnificently Christian pronouncements: it is therefore the more amazing to find him equating absolute pacifism with the refusal to use any kind of force.²

We are, however, even more gravely misunderstood by those who see only the negative side of our position and

¹ *Christianity and the World Order*, p. 81.

² Of course the pacifist, as well as the non-pacifist, has to face in particular circumstances questions as to what force may be used. But for both, the problem is not whether to use force but what quality of force may legitimately be used, by whom, and against whom it should be used, and what quantity is appropriate to the special circumstances. I have discussed this further in Chapter IV.

regard us as rather like the tiresome children of our Lord's parable who "refused to play" (St. Luke vii: 32). If indeed our policy were to do nothing in face of the evils that are stalking the earth to-day, we should richly deserve all the opprobrium that is heaped on us by our most hostile critics. But we reject the way of war because we believe that in Christ there is a higher and better way. It is noteworthy that Dr. Oldham in the *Christian News-Letter* for November 20, 1940, writes that "as the full effects of war are seen, the question remains to haunt us whether, even in the political sphere, the means are not such as inevitably to defeat the end"; and we find John Buchan admiring the wisdom of Señor de Madariaga's dictum—"a democracy that goes to war, if beaten, loses its liberty at the hands of its adversary; if victorious it loses its liberty at its own hands."¹ This but expresses in the political sphere Christ's teaching that one cannot cast out devils by Beelzebub. It is our hope that in these essays may be found some indications of a better way.

I write this just after a Christmas Day on which both sides have abstained from aerial bombing. Everyone has felt it right. It is not merely that we are thankful to have been spared from bombs and sirens; but also we are glad that our airmen have not had to do acts which we all feel to be incompatible with the spirit of Bethlehem. If Christians *really* believed that this war is Christ's way of meeting evil, they should have advocated intensified military action on the Feast of His Birth: the fact that even non-pacifists have welcomed the unofficial truce shows that in their hearts they know that warfare and Christmas are incompatible. We ask our readers to accept this book from writers who, as believers in the Incarnation, desire to be guided by the spirit of Bethlehem not on one but on three hundred and sixty-five days of the year.

PERCY HARTILL.

St. Stephen's Day, 1940.

¹ *Memory Hold-the-Door*, p. 220.

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CHAPTER I

THE SUFFERING SERVANT OF THE LORD

Pacifism in the Old Testament

By

THE REV. KENNETH RAWLINGS, B.A.

Rector of St. Michael's, Lewes

CHAPTER I

THE SUFFERING SERVANT OF THE LORD

Pacifism in the Old Testament

In this paper I shall hope to show that the basic principle of pacifism—which is the principle of the Cross, can be traced far back behind the Gospel to certain developments of Hebrew thought recorded in the Old Testament scriptures, and found in their fullest expression in the idea of the Servant of God who brings deliverance to His people, not by conquering but by suffering.

At first sight it may seem a hopeless task to seek support for the pacifist faith in the Old Testament; even in the New Testament many Christians cannot find it, and those of us who believe that pacifism is implicit in the teaching of our Lord have to admit that, as yet, the general Christian conscience fails to perceive that implication.

How then can we expect to find in pre-Christian times conceptions of truth into which the Holy Spirit has not even yet guided the whole body of the Church?

Many of the Old Testament writers not only record with considerable zest wars of the most aggressive and bloodthirsty character, but they often represent God Himself as instigating and approving them. A pacifist clergyman must feel disconcerted when, having embarked upon the first lesson at Mattins or Evensong, he finds himself relating the story of some atrocious massacre carried out, as it seems, at the express command of Jehovah. He suspects that the more war-like section of his congregation are aware of his discomfiture, and secretly rejoice.

Yet I believe it is true to say that in relation to war some of the Hebrew Prophets and Old Testament writers were more enlightened than many modern Christians. Consider, for example, some of the utterances of Isaiah and Jeremiah when their nation was at war, or threatened with war. They

did not feel that patriotism required them to assure their fellow countrymen that they were a righteous people, chosen by God to be the instrument of His judgment upon other nations. Sometimes they spoke like this, but on some occasions they said the precise opposite. They said that Israel's enemies had been chosen by God to execute Divine judgment upon her, and that Israel must prepare for disaster and defeat. Can you imagine the impression that would be made if any religious leader in England to-day publicly declared that Hitler was an instrument of God's wrath against the British Empire, and that his military successes were divinely ordained for the punishment of our national sins? Let me hasten to say that I do not necessarily commit myself to that view. All I am concerned to point out is that, if any religious leader dared to express such a view, he would be execrated by this fellow Christians for being *unpatriotic*. No one would stop to consider whether he had told the truth or not. The question would be regarded as irrelevant. In war-time no one is encouraged to tell the truth unless it serves the national war effort. To be what is called a "defeatist" is to be a traitor, and the Minister of Information has told us that the mere suggestion of the possibility of our defeat cannot be tolerated.

Such a conception of patriotism would have been incomprehensible to the prophets of the Old Testament. They loved their country and nation with passionate devotion, but they loved the truth more. They believed that the Jews were God's chosen people, and that they inhabited the land of Canaan by Divine decree. But they did not believe that God would fight for them and give them victory whether they were faithful to Him or not. They did not believe that every war in which they might be engaged was necessarily a righteous war. And they did not shrink from denouncing the sins of their nation and declaring that, unless they repented, God would fight against them and deliver them into their enemies' hands. Above all, *they preached this stern truth, in war time*, when the enemy was at the gate, and when, according to our modern notions, it was the supreme duty of all patriots to help to maintain the national morale.

Thus, when the politicians of Jerusalem were trembling

before the threat of an Assyrian invasion, and were attempting all sorts of diplomatic manœuvres to stave off the peril, Isaiah explained to them that their efforts were useless because God Himself was using the great heathen Empire of Assyria as His agent for the punishment of Judah and Samaria. Clearly Isaiah would not have agreed that, in times of national crisis, all criticism of one's nation and its rulers must be silenced and that it is a patriotic duty to regard defeat as unthinkable.

The Old Testament prophets have also something to teach us about the meaning of trust in God. Although they believed in the righteousness of war when God, as they thought, commanded it, they did not believe that the cause of God and righteousness depended upon military success, nor even upon human effort at all. They were convinced that God could deliver His people and vindicate His righteousness without help from anyone. We too profess to believe that. We sing with fervour:

“Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.”

But we sing it with mental reservations. We trust in God to deliver us as long as the British Navy is undefeated. We believe in the sufficiency of God's arm reinforced by the Royal Air Force.

The prophets, and, I think, many of the Jewish people, believed that God could intervene to save them without their striking a blow in their own defence. Hence the many stories in the Old Testament of strange and unexpected deliverances through the power of God's arm alone, without the reinforcement of chariots and horses and weapons of war. It is a sad irony that, after nearly two thousand years of Christianity, we still have to learn from Old Testament writers the elementary truth that God is almighty and that He can be trusted to defend the cause of righteousness without the help of man and his weapons of destruction.

One of the main arguments for supporting the present war is that the military defeat of Britain would mean the destruction of Christianity and the unrestricted domination of evil through-

out Europe. To Isaiah such an argument would have seemed blasphemy. He would have replied, "Woe unto them that go down to Egypt for help, and stay upon horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many, and in horsemen, because they are very strong, but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord".

Now this Old Testament trust in God to vindicate His righteousness, not only, if He so chooses, without the co-operation of His people, but even, if they are unrighteous, by bringing disaster and defeat upon them, is closely connected with another idea running all through the Old Testament scriptures, the idea namely, that righteousness is profitable, that goodness leads to prosperity, and that the man who serves God faithfully will be saved from the earthly misfortunes which are the proper penalty of wrong-doing.

This is so familiar a view to students, and even to casual readers, of the Old Testament that I need not illustrate it by numerous quotations. It is expressed most clearly in the Psalms.

"Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord,
That delighteth greatly in his commandments.
His seed shall be mighty upon earth;
The generation of the upright shall be blessed.
Wealth and riches are in his house.

I have been young, and now am old,
Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his seed begging their bread.

O fear the Lord, ye his saints;
For there is no want to them that fear him.
The young lions do lack and suffer hunger;
But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.

What man is he that desireth life,
And loveth many days that he may see good?
Keep thy tongue from evil,
And thy lips from speaking guile.
Depart from evil and do good;
Seek peace, and pursue it."

But, side by side with this simple trust in God to protect and provide for His servants, there goes the frequent complaint that the hard facts of experience contradict it and that, in actual fact, it is the ungodly who prosper and the righteous who suffer. This complaint is made over and over again in the Psalms and the only answer the psalmists can give is that God will certainly vindicate the righteous in the end and that the punishment of the ungodly, though it may tarry, will certainly come. It is all a matter of patience.

Now to Christians, with their belief in a future life, this may seem a satisfactory explanation, but it could hardly have been satisfactory to the Jews because, if they had any belief in personal immortality at all, which is somewhat doubtful, it was a very vague and shadowy belief, and had little influence upon their religious thought. They, therefore, could not be content to wait indefinitely for the vindication of the righteous. The only life that had any reality for them was swiftly passing. If it was really true that righteousness was profitable, it must be shown to be profitable for the life that now is. Thus the Book of Job, which is wholly concerned with this problem of the suffering of the innocent, ends with the complete restoration of God's afflicted servant to earthly prosperity. But this was mere poetic fancy. It ignored the hard fact that in many instances there was no happy ending to the story of human misery. Clearly some better solution of the age-long problem had yet to be found.

It was not, and could not, be found by any of the saints and seers of the Old Testament but surely the second Isaiah saw the beginning of the true answer in his conception of the Suffering Servant of God.

It seems probable that the Messianic idea originated during the Exile, when the Jewish dynasty was brought to an end and the hope of restoration became centred in the figure of an ideal king who would re-establish the Kingdom of Israel and reign over it in righteousness.

But the second Isaiah gave a new and more profound significance to the Messiah. He represented him, not as a conqueror, but as a sufferer; not as one who delivers the innocent from persecution, but as one who shares it, and who, although himself innocent, is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Here, then, we have in the Old Testament the dim perception that perhaps after all the real victory of righteousness is with the sufferer and not with the conqueror. A Hebrew prophet, seven centuries before Christ, catches a glimpse of the truth revealed in the death and passion and resurrection of our Lord—the truth that to strive to save one's life is to lose it, and that to be willing to lose one's life for love's sake is to save it. Perhaps Isaiah even came to believe that suffering undeserved, but willingly accepted, has a redemptive value.

The relevance of all this to pacifism is clear. The only argument in favour of war that seems to me worthy of serious consideration by Christians is that war may be necessary for the deliverance of the righteous and the helpless from the power of the wicked and the strong, and may therefore be an instrument of the Divine purpose. That view finds expression in some of the very familiar questions put to pacifists. "Can it be right to stand by and see helpless and innocent people crushed and persecuted?" "Can it be God's will that the righteous should be forsaken?" "Of two evils ought we not always to choose the less, and is not war a lesser evil than the triumph of evil men over the good?"

To such questions Old Testament thought at its highest replies falteringly that possibly the real triumph may belong to the innocent and unresisting victims of persecution rather than with their persecutors.

But the answer of the Christian faith is confident and dogmatic. It is that victory does *always* belong to the innocent sufferer if he suffers willingly for love's sake, and that it is always his oppressors who are defeated.

In Christ the ancient perplexity of the Old Testament writers is completely and finally stated. Here at last is the one perfectly righteous man confronted by all the powers of evil. Evil has seemed to triumph over many holy men: can it triumph over this Man, the holiest of all? If it is true that God intervenes to save His faithful servants, will He intervene now to save His only-begotten Son?

"He trusted in God that He would deliver him:
Let Him deliver him now if He will have him."

And, if God will not intervene without man's co-operation, will the friends and disciples of Jesus espouse His cause and strike a blow in His defence? If ever the sword should be drawn for a righteous cause, surely it should be drawn now. If ever there was a case for armed intervention it is now, when Jesus, the one hope of the world, who came into the world for the one purpose of overthrowing the kingdom of evil, stands alone and helpless before His cruel enemies.

But there was no intervention by God or man. Jesus refused to defend Himself or to be defended. The one man who tried to defend Him by violence was bidden to put back his sword into its sheath. All His friends forsook Him and fled. And last of all, God too seemed to forsake Him.

"I have been young, and now am old" said the psalmist of Israel, "yet saw I never the righteous forsaken." But Jesus cried from His Cross "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Is there anything more God could have done to persuade men that there is no victory to be won over evil except the victory of sacrificial love, the perfect love that casts out fear, the love that casts out selfishness, hatred, and revenge, the love that forgives to the uttermost?

But we shall be told that love of this heroic sort is altogether beyond the power of average men and women, and that therefore we must fight evil with such weapons as we can use. Pacifism, it is said, might be all very well in a perfect world, but we have to deal with the world as it is, and with human beings as they are.

To this I reply, first, that if it is indeed true that mankind cannot as yet take up the sword of love to smite evil, then it is useless to attack evil at all, for there is no other weapon by which it can be overcome and destroyed. To attempt to fight evil with violence and bloodshed as alternatives to love is as foolish and futile as to give a sick man deadly poison because you cannot find his medicine.

Secondly, is it really true that men in general are incapable of sacrificing themselves for the sake of the God of love when it is evident that they will sacrifice life itself in the service of the God of war? Upon almost every war memorial in this country you may read the words "Greater love hath no

man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends". Some of us would hesitate to apply these words to those who die in the attempt to kill. But there is this to be said: if millions of ordinary men in every country are willing to face agony and death for the sake of honour or country, might they not be equally capable of the self-sacrifice and courage demanded by the renunciation of the way of violence and the acceptance of the way of the Cross?

The war-makers cannot have it both ways. If the common people who have so little to gain from war can be induced by their rulers and statesmen, and alas, by their spiritual pastors, to slay and be slain for the sake of an earthly empire, why should it be impossible for them to share Christ's Cross for the sake of His kingdom?

We who call ourselves pacifists and try to be Christians, have faith in the fundamental sanity and goodness of ordinary people in all countries, and by the Grace of God we will continue to bear witness before men that it is only by the way of the Cross that the power of evil can be broken and God's kingdom of righteousness and peace established upon earth.

CHAPTER II
THE GOSPEL BASIS OF PACIFISM

By

THE REV. C. PAUL GLIDDON
Secretary of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

CHAPTER II

THE GOSPEL BASIS OF PACIFISM

IN facing the problem of human sin the Christian is not working in the dark, for he has seen God addressing Himself to this very issue. As a believer, he is dogmatically certain that God has out-dated all His rivals and that any method put forward as an alternative to that followed by God must necessarily be inferior; while, as a baptized person, he is pledged to follow the example of our Saviour Christ and to be His faithful soldier and servant, even when his natural reasoning might lead him to regard His Lord's generalship as mistaken and hope of victory as indeed forlorn. It is reasonable to believe that the grave question of trying to combat sin in some particular nation will be answered as there is applied the method God employed in dealing with the more serious issue of sin upon a universal scale. Christians who maintain that the solution of secular problems must necessarily be found within the political area seem to forget that it was through Christ the world itself was made, that His is the mind and purpose behind creation, and that it is therefore unlikely that the world will work smoothly, or even work at all, until that which is in the mind of the Designer is reproduced in the design.

Those who hold that there are times when evil can only be destroyed by force of arms will probably admit that there is nothing peculiarly Christian about such a remedy, that some of the finest and most heroic examples of warfare belong to the pagan world, and even that the ethics of war can be developed independently of the Christian revelation. Thus a speech by Pericles was very properly quoted for the inspiration of the Greeks when they went to war in 1940, whereas a passage of similar length taken from the sayings of Jesus would almost certainly contain at least some words not particularly helpful for the purpose in view. Since these wars against evil are commonly described as crusades it is

strange that they should also be popularly supported, for crusades are wars of the Cross and there is Thomas à Kempis' word that "the lovers of the Cross are few". Unless men will die for what they do not love, it would appear that there is a certain difference between the way of the Holy Cross and the way of the holy war, a point of difference which may be of importance, seeing that a nation that lost its faith in Christianity during the process of a war would probably still fight on for other considerations.

Whether the way of combating evil by means of war may sometimes be consistent with the mind of Jesus Christ is an issue that has often been argued as if it depended solely on the things which Jesus said, whereas the crux of the matter seems to be not what Jesus said about sin, but what he did about it. Even when we have given due consideration to such an action as the cleansing of the temple it remains true that it is not Jesus the scourger, but Jesus the scourged who has beaten His way into the heart of humanity.

GOD'S PROBLEM AND OUR OWN.

Apart from its concern with national possessions, for a Christian the importance of a war lies in its ability to undermine human sin and thus to do something in line with God's purpose in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. The situation confronting God two thousand years ago was not unlike that which a nation faces when it believes itself called to marshal the forces of righteousness against an evil power. Of course no Christian nation would soberly claim that its own righteousness was at all like God's, even though it judged the evil in the enemy as gross as any with which God had to deal; what it would feel would be that it was facing a particular and gross example of that sin from which Christ came to save the world. But it would be unfair to argue that, seeing the burden of entering into conflict with large scale sin had fallen upon a nation made up of not very perfect humans, therefore the example of Jesus was irrelevant and the desired result must somehow be sought by other means. If God's way of dealing with sin was never intended to be followed by men, then Jesus the

teacher would certainly not have led men astray by showing them how sin might be broken, when, as a matter of fact, they would be wasting their time and going to vain martyrdom in such an imitation of Christ. A Christian nation fighting in what it regards as a righteous cause and yet conscious of its own unrighteousness must either attempt to employ the methods used by God, or, on the grounds of its deep unrighteousness, postpone the struggle until it has attained sufficient sanctity, or else, of course, leave God out of the reckoning altogether and use such means as political wisdom appears to demand. What it cannot do in honesty is to claim that its ends are God's but that its methods are its own.

St. Paul's grim description of the moral degradation of the pagan world—of the larger part of that lost world the Son of Man came to seek and to save—shows that the sin into which men had fallen was about as horrible as even sin can be. Although there be such a thing as original sin, there is certainly little originality about sin, for three thousand years of fresh venture in vice leaves a more experienced age little to teach Sodom. It was not a world which was being rather naughty or falling into excusable error, not a humanity more sinned against than sinning, that Jesus came to save; it was towards a world downright and deliberately wicked, unable to do any more with His love than make of it a cruel jest, that His hands were outstretched all the day long.

GOD'S STRANGE JUSTICE.

Precedent demanded that such a world should be punished and justice that the punishment should be as heavy as the crime; yet it was obvious that, if such were exacted, the criminal world would die under its punishment. It has been suggested that God's knowledge of these facts made it necessary for the sentence upon men to be totally commuted, justice being satisfied by the punishment of the sinless Jesus, and that this explains how it came about that Jesus did suffer and the world did not, though it is generally agreed that, through this suffering Saviour, sin somehow received a

mortal blow. It is interesting to notice that this doctrine is so anxious to fasten a legal conception of justice upon God that, rather than question whether man's conception is also God's, it is willing to attribute to God practices for which an earthly judge would have to face instant dismissal. That Jesus saves from sin is the common teaching of the Church; that the world was not punished as it deserved its continued existence demonstrates; that not everybody concerned in this miserable business escaped scot free is evidenced by nails through certain hands and feet and by a wounded side. These are the basic facts of our redemption, of that salvation wrought through the Cross; a world guilty yet unscored; a Saviour scourged but guiltless; a world by that Guiltless One somehow saved. And these facts make nonsense of justice as the world understands it; though even-handed justice may well feel it has much to teach a God who sends His rain alike upon the evil and the good. St. Paul testifies that, for himself and for the world, there had at one time been the experience of sin everywhere triumphant and that its continued victory seemed assured. Jesus cannot have changed the nature of sin; that which had seemed so invincible could never have been really so; what Jesus did was to undermine the fiction of sin's invincibility; showing it up openly, placarding upon the Cross the secret way through its defences.

Only God knows why it was that a wrath and indignation so justly provoked was vented after this amazing manner; why the lion of the tribe of Judah was revealed as a lamb slain from the foundation of the earth; that such was so is the very core of the Gospel message, the basic fact upon which all is built. There is no other way whereby we may be saved from sin than the way taken by Jesus, and to attempt to produce the same results by methods which Christ rejected is to reject His guidance as either impracticable or inadequate. Certainly no other way of dealing with sin has met with success, for sin lives in the human will and the will is not really changed by punishment, which, when it does bring about alterations in conduct, does so by fear of consequences and not by the will freely forsaking the loving of unholy things and turning to love of another sort. It is because sin springs from this perverted freewill that it can only be

removed by a different sort of willing. This involves the entry in of a new love which cannot be self-induced but must be provoked by that in which love already exists, not as a passing mood but as an eternal changelessness.

NOTHING LESS DRASTIC THAN LOVE COULD DEFEAT SIN SO GROSS.

It was not through any light estimate of the exceeding sinfulness of sin that it so happened that, in this memorable encounter, the blood which was shed was the Redeemer's, while the sinner had no wounds to bathe. It was not because of a rebellion in heaven that no legions of angels were sent out to destroy; not because the power was absent, but because that sort of power was insufficiently powerful for the occasion. The only thing that could hope to outmatch the sin of the world was, not a might that could destroy, but a love that could not be destroyed. God did not send forth His Son because the armaments of heaven were exhausted; Love came down at Christmas because only Love without an ally could accomplish the task in hand. Jesus is not God getting pretty desperate but God bent on victory. He is the secret weapon of our warfare, He can save and He alone.

When, therefore, the Church countenances the employment against evil of any force other than an overcoming goodness, it is because she has underestimated the power that confronts her, has adopted a frivolous estimate of evil. There might be a place for worldly armaments in some frontier skirmish with evil, but, when the thing becomes serious, when forces that are spiritually dangerous really begin to threaten, only those who estimate too lightly the opposing forces, or do not really wish to see them routed, can countenance the employment of the weapons that belonged to the days of our ignorance or can tolerate the refusal to ensnare the enemy with the love that will not let them go. "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" was not the cry of a Christ whose anger had suddenly dried up, or who had suddenly gone soft; it was the Will and testament of One who felt as none other the weight of the sin of the world, who knew what means would be effective against it and what would fail, and who, determined to launch

against sin the only force that seemed likely to destroy it, let loose the battalions of an inexhaustible love. Thus the catholic can see in the crucifix the symbol of the power and the wisdom and the glory of God. Tortured and twisted though that lonely Man upon His Roman gallows may appear, there is no other power quite so powerful, no other wisdom quite so wise, no other glory quite so glorious.

THE SYMBOL OF OUR SALVATION.

It is hardly strange that the Church has never succeeded in convincing the world that Jesus Christ really is its Saviour, for all the evidence it can produce is the torn body of the Redeemer and the unscarred forms of those who judged Him guilty and nailed Him to the Cross. The world is entitled to question whether this can really be a saving victim winning victory over sin and to hope that, if this be victory, she may enjoy defeat. To which the Church has to reply that this is truly her conception of victory; that it was thus the power of sin was broken, and that her Gospel is that it was for the ungodly, for those who were yet sinners, Jesus died. Thus, when the Church prays for victory on earth she can only have in mind the sort of victory Jesus won on Calvary, for on earth Jesus has not yet been victorious in any other manner and the Church cannot ask to be crowned where her Lord is still rejected; it is enough for the disciple if he be as his master. Small wonder, when a nation is asked to pray for victory and is shown the cross as its symbol, she finds it difficult to say Amen.

“WHY HAST THOU THUS DEALT WITH US?”

The cross sums up what Jesus did about the sin of the world but the cross, we are always reminded, is the supreme mystery of our religion. Although we cannot see its whole meaning, although we do not fully know why God so dealt with us, experience at least suggests that, of all the methods of dealing with sin, this way of meeting evil with good works better than any other. Had the torturers of ancient days any foresight of an age of science, they might have dreamed

of prisons generously supplied with machines for the infliction of exquisite pain that made their clumsy racks ridiculously antiquated. What they would never have imagined would have been that, through trial and error, a more scientific people would have given up the whole torture system and have trusted largely to a method of appealing to some not very apparent better nature which they maintained existed in almost every criminal. This arousing the dormant good by making a surprise attack on evil through extending to the evil man unexpected kindness is a method with an impressive record of success. It is strange that it had to be re-discovered by those investigating the treatment of the criminal, when it is, after all, the technique of which Jesus Christ remains the world's surest exponent. The Son of God made His appeal to the best in man and showed that, if we had any hope of glory, it was through the Christ in us. This may seem to many to be a fantastic way of dealing with sin but, after all, it is reasonable enough. If the doing of an evil act justifies the performance of yet another evil act in reply, then the world has become morally a poorer world, poorer by two evil acts now done. If we resolutely refuse to allow some evil done to us to provoke us to any answering evil, the world is still a poorer world, for the evil action done to us still remains. If, in reply to the evil done, there comes an unexpected deed of goodness, then the world, made poorer by the first wrong action, has had its lost wealth restored and, because a good act is a more potent thing than evil, the world has become positively enriched through someone who has the wisdom to use the weapons of the Christ joining battle with sin.

The claim that Jesus was sinless is based upon the fact that history has upheld Pilate's verdict, "I find no fault in this man". Jesus laboured for the kingdom amidst the conditions of an imperfect world but never for one moment, either by word or deed, did He suggest for others or allow for Himself that this justified evil being done for the sake of an ultimate good. If it is necessary sometimes to do evil that good may come, then Jesus, very man and very God, would have been bound by that same necessity. This would mean that the claim that Jesus is sinless signifies only that

He carried to perfection the art of choosing the lesser of two evils. But to suggest that good ends can be established by evil means overlooks the fact that an end is simply the last of a series of means. The means that Christ employed, the road along which He walked, looked out of place in this sinful world, not because there was nowhere where they were in place, but because the land of their origin was the City of God. Thus the Christian can only be sure that the means he is adopting, the road he is taking, is really that on which his heart is set when, while he journeys in a far-off country, he finds the stones of the city already beneath his feet. When he comes at last within the kingdom there is one thing that has long been familiar to him; it is the colour of the walls of its buildings, made of the stones he knew as he travelled that narrow way, for means and ends have not two moral origins but one.

IT IS HELD THAT THE GOSPEL METHOD IS NOT RELEVANT TO NATIONS.

But it is argued that the whole attempt to relate the example of Jesus to our own times and, especially, to apply it as a basis for national conduct, overlooks the fact that Jesus was living under entirely different conditions and that He was not addressing Himself to nations but to the comparatively pious folk who gathered round Him. If the teaching of Jesus was never intended to be applied to nations, it seems strange that, although the tests which He said would be imposed at the last judgment were very personal in character, yet it was to nations gathered before the throne that they were given. In any case, if the example and teaching of Jesus is not relevant to nations, then it follows that we do not know exactly what a Christian nation would be like, for we do not know by what standards its conduct would be regulated. We can, of course, make guesses, but we can have no certain knowledge as to the accuracy of our guesses, unless the Christian code given to the individual is intended also for the nation. If something in the nature of an incarnation in terms of a nation is still awaited, it seems that the content of such a phrase as "A Christian Nation" cannot even be dis-

cussed, seeing that the whole matter is still "sub judice". Unless Christ's teaching is intended for nations as well as individuals, a Christian nation may be something like a Fascist State, a British Empire, a Crown Colony, a Soviet Union, a self-governing Dominion, or a City State—Greek, Venetian or Salt Lake; or it may be something utterly unlike any one of these. It follows that to condemn a nation as un-Christian is meaningless and that to praise it as Christian has no more meaning either, for it assumes that we already possess a knowledge which, without a definite revelation, we are certainly denied. On the other hand, if it is held that there is no such uncertainty as to the form of a Christian nation, there is no doubt as to whence comes the only light we have. It is in the teaching and example of Jesus, accepted already for individual Christians and now to be embraced for the guidance of nations that would claim to be Christian.

IMMEDIATE PERSONAL OBEDIENCE NOT EXPECTED.

That the teaching of Jesus was not intended for the age in which He was speaking, or that He did not expect His followers immediately to attempt to follow His commandments, is a judgment on His ministry which would probably have occurred to no one had the demands He made been of a simpler character. The doctrine of the time-lag is the Christian theologians' attempt to lighten the burden of a Christianity which has been proved over-difficult. In no place in the teaching of Jesus, and at no time, is there any justification whatsoever for this delayed-action discipleship; whereas there is much to suggest that Jesus demanded immediate and complete obedience, and that those who had once ventured to put their hands to the plough should go straightforward with the undertaken task.

Indeed it may well be claimed that the time element is a critical feature of the teaching of Jesus, a fact that is indicated by the very word "Gospel" in its meaning of good news. News is not just an historical record, something which derives all its importance from what is said. Its significance is that it is something freshly made known, that the ink of the proclamation is still wet. "Queen Anne's dead" is an

historical fact, though it is no longer news. Yet there was a time when it was the most sensational news anyone had to impart. Its value was not so much in the fact—everyone knew that one day the Queen would die, even if her bounty lived—but that she had died just then was news, though not good news; not merely part of history, but something newly added to history.

When Jesus came declaring His gospel He taught—as His detractors have not been slow to point out—little that was new; indeed He took over much of the teaching of the prophets and particularly the preaching of the coming Kingdom. The prophets indicated what the coming deliverer would say and no one objected to Jesus reading their venerated words. It was when He suggested that the future had become the “now”; that “some day” had become “to-day”; that rioting arose and murder was planned. If Jesus had glossed over the time element, if He had been content, like a politic ecclesiastic, to let His teaching be definite about the “how” of the good life, but vague about the “now”, then He would certainly have escaped both dying on Calvary and living in history. Everyman has Utopia somewhere in his thoughts. The sound man defers it to “any other business”; only the more dangerous fellow places it as the next subject on the agenda.

YET THE CHURCH REQUIRES US DAILY TO FOLLOW JESUS.

That Christ is to be followed but not yet is certainly a view for which the teaching of the Church of England, as expressed in the Book of Common Prayer, offers no support. Before any baptism the God-parents are asked whether they will renounce the devil and all his works and will obediently keep God's Holy Will and Commandments. Instead of answering that this will be done later on, or in a new order of society, or as far as is practicable, they declare a complete renunciation of the devil and a willingness to walk in the way of God's commandments for all their days. The newly baptized is then signed with a cross in token that he shall hereafter continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant and the God-parents are reminded that this involves following

the example of our Saviour Christ and being made like unto Him. These promises are repeated in the Catechism and solemnly re-affirmed in the presence of the Bishop before Confirmation. Only those who feel themselves in Love and Charity with their neighbours are invited to the Holy Communion, a condition which certainly involves a demand for a very close following of Jesus Christ, since the word neighbour is to be interpreted in the light of the exhortation at the time of Communion which refers to a "perfect charity with all men". So, in the mind of the Church as reflected in the Prayer Book, we are people who recognise that we stand in need of Grace in order that we may even now resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; a people who must ask the Heavenly Father for grace, not to-morrow but to-day, "to follow Thee the Only God". The Church sees in Jesus not only a sacrifice for sin but also an example of Godly life, bidding us pray that we may "daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of His Most Holy Life".

It is no part of our business to argue whether such should have been the attitude of the Church; what concerns us is the inquiry as to what is involved in the position taken by the Church centuries ago and never at any time either officially modified or revoked. If we are to follow the blessed steps of the Most Holy Life of Jesus, then we must ask "What would Jesus do?" a question still regarded at least as sufficiently searching for the consciences of children, for boys of ten, or twelve, or fourteen. If that same question is inadequate for youths of sixteen, eighteen, or twenty, it would seem a little dangerous to train children while they are under instruction in one morality, and then, when they are out of touch with such regular instruction, to leave them to switch over to another system in which they are totally untrained and through which they must make their own way bereft of all guidance. If, on the other hand, there is not to be this changeover, then the question does remain relevant throughout life, and a man, whether he be soldier or civilian, can still ask himself "What would Jesus do?" and still guide his conscience by the answer his honest judgment yields. To say the question should be not "What

would Jesus do?" but "What would Jesus have me do?" obviously, unless it is a distinction without a difference, suggests that we should receive another sort of reply. But this means that Jesus would have us do, not what He would have done, but what He would not have done, thus inserting a negative in the commandment "Come follow me". Such a proceeding might ease the embarrassment of the Gospel of war-time but only at the price of leaving the Church without any Gospel at all when peace returns.

FOR JESUS IS THE WAY

To say that Jesus only intended His teaching to become the marching orders of the Church when there evolves a world fit for Christians to live in is to miss the significance of His being, not only the Truth and the Life, but also the Way. Even the writer who describes Christ as Omega also calls Him Alpha, showing that, in his judgment, Christ held all the space between, not only the end but the beginning, not only the beginning and end but all that links one with the other. Certainly there are pictures of a new order in the Prophets and in Revelation, and yet Jesus Himself gives no clear picture of the world to come; His concern is with means rather than with ends. Indeed, such we would expect from Him, for the land of our dreams is largely common land, it is over the question as to how that land may be reached that disputes and perplexities continually arise. He who was the timeless Lord of Time showed Himself oddly interested in the next thing to be done and the next hour to be lived. For Him this would seem to have been the truest wisdom: "Take care of to-day and eternity will take care of itself."

OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN

Jesus is not called for nothing the Captain of our Salvation, He came to make war on Sin and His method was attack, attack, always attack. For the Christian soldier this had necessarily to require the perpetual taking of the initiative, which meant that a Christian had to act as if he were already

dominant; not simply to play a waiting game, attempting to counter the skilled blows of his opponents. There is no suggestion of gradualness here or of a policy adapting and re-adapting itself to particular situations. Because in the perfected kingdom the Christian would be a person who loves all men, therefore, as a soldier stationed in the world but under the Captain's orders, he is perpetually to observe the rule of Love. The commandment about loving one's enemies is certainly difficult to obey, but any other sort of order could not be reconciled with the general theory of Christ's strategy, for it has been wisely said that the Sermon on the Mount can be summed up in three words "Do it first". Jesus thought of Himself as the Light of the World but He called His disciples by a similar title: they were not to be simply a break in the blackness, a light just peeping out of the covering bushel, they were to be very light and to see them was to see Him. It was only thus that the world could have a chance of knowing what God intended, what He was really driving at. If the City set on a hill was to be only a nice town, greatly superior to the cities of the plain but living in no more than a qualified obedience to the Will of God, then men who looked upon this City could never know the nature of that Will which Christians were summoned to do even as it was being done in heaven. Jesus did not suggest that His followers were to constitute a provisional order and that the City they founded should be just the rude first-planning of something that, with the unfolding ages, moved on towards perfection; the City set on a hill was surely a City never to be superseded, for it was the City of the Great King, Whose Will was perfectly obeyed within its walls.

AS SOLDIERS OF CHRIST WE ARE PLEDGED TO IMMEDIATE OBEDIENCE.

It is not suggested that this strategy of Jesus in demanding immediate and complete obedience was the only one that might have been employed, what is suggested is that there is nowhere in the Gospels the shadow of a sanction for that idea of slow and steady improvement which has obsessed minds

seeking to carry into the moral world an evolutionary process thought to be discerned in the natural. It is pleasant to think that the mills of God grind slowly but the evidence is that they grind as the winds that drive the mills, dead calm for days together and then racing wildly round. Jesus taught that His Kingdom was like treasure found or a coin recovered; not something just enough to carry on with but the whole of what is sought discovered in a moment. He said that His Kingdom was like leaven, something which gets its task completed in a couple of hours, or like the mustard seed which He Himself troubled to explain could almost be seen growing. If by all this He really meant to say that it was the business of a Christian, through maintaining a rather higher standard than existed around him, to leave the world a little better than he found it, then His command of language broke down on a most significant issue. What His words do suggest is that Christian soldiers should even now wear the uniform of the City of God and, in the midst of a naughty world, conform with the City's customs, observe its laws, implicitly perform the command of its King. This may be a most debatable policy, but neither the experience of empire builders who attempt something similar in the political world, nor the degree of success attained by Christians who have followed it, nor the authority of Him in whose Mind the experiment was first conceived, warrant its repudiation.

AND SO SIGNED WITH THE CROSS.

"We do sign Him with the sign of the cross." Of the cross because it is the symbol of Christianity which refuses to glory in anything save the cross. This does not mean that Christianity only came to life when Jesus came to His death, for the life and death of Jesus are all of a piece and the whole reveals what is going on in the eternal heart of God. The Saviour of the world has redeemed us by His cross and passion, not because the Incarnate Son tried a new policy in Holy Week which He had not before attempted, but because the Christ who went into action against the sin of the world on Calvary was the Christ who had gone into

action every whit as intelligent and effective when He first became flesh and dwelt amongst us. Calvary, so far from being the beginning of a new adventure on the part of the God Man, was the price He paid for refusing to turn from an adventure already begun. It is for this reason that the Christian can take up his cross and follow Jesus; not halt, as one nailed to a tree, but march, as one bearing a banner.

When, therefore, the Church instructs us to follow in the steps of Christ, it is a Christ upon a cross who is held before our eyes, not on the cross only because so He died, but on the cross because so He lived. The Christian's total duty is to follow that example and to follow it in all things and in all ways. The life of Christ as summarized in the cross was a life of sacrifice but that does involve either in logic or in act that every sacrifice is a "lesser Calvary", for Jesus is much more than an outstanding example of someone dying in a good cause. Millions of people have lost their lives in fighting wars they thought to be righteous; they have gone out to kill their enemies and have themselves been killed; hundreds of thousands of others have been put to death rather than deny the faith they held, even though that faith has been much less than Christian; few indeed have been the causes so poor as not to boast their company of martyrs; but the outstanding thing about Jesus is something much more than that, of all this company, He was the most notable. The significance of Jesus is that He came into the world to save sinners and that, watching Him, we see God entering the lists against sin's triumphant power. Others have tried to deal sin a mortal blow; what is astonishing about Jesus is the type of weapon used by this divine Champion, especially if it be true that He was not making simply a new experiment, but bringing against sin the mature and final technique of Almighty God. Whatever else the "one oblation once offered" may mean, it certainly does mean that, neither in time nor in eternity, will there be found a more effective way of attacking the sin in sinful men than that employed by Him who suffered death upon the cross for our redemption.

SOME WERE COMPELLED TO BEAR THE CROSS.

Although, with the exception of Judas, Jesus was the only fatal casualty in the events of that first Good Friday, Caiaphas, Pilate and the Sadducees going away unharmed, it would be untrue to assume that the friends of Jesus shared the immunity of His enemies and that He alone suffered. If Jesus had allowed the thought of the agony of His friends to deflect Him from the course He was planning, then He would have continued to avoid falling into the hands of the authorities. But, so far from this being so, not only was Simon of Cyrene compelled to bear the cross but others too were dragged in. That little company of fishermen who had hoped to live and die by Galilee were never warned when Jesus summoned them that it was a death summons that they had received, that because they had not said "Suffer me first to go" they had set out on an adventure that would end in martyrdom. It is significant that once when Jesus started to explain what His bringing of a sword would involve, He said that it meant setting one part of a family against the other part, a suffering within the family itself. The only wound among His enemies was one He Himself quickly healed, but the spear thrust in His side remained, and perhaps eternally remains, while the heart of His own Mother was pierced with a sword. It is indeed a dangerous thing to belong to the company of the friends of Christ. Yet, if a Christian be in truth a soldier of the Cross, this is precisely what we would expect. The objective in the Christian warfare is the destruction of sin and what the Christian soldier has to suffer in attaining that end is not the chief concern. Just as the missionary does not ask himself "What is going to happen to the missionaries" but "What is going to happen to the message", so, in the general attack upon sin, in some other nation or at home, the Christian cannot consult his own comfort but only find the swiftest way of discrediting sin itself and so loosening its grip upon those whom it enthralls. Because the Christian warrior stands in no eternal peril God shows a certain recklessness in the use of His own soldiery. For Him what matters is, not the security of the saint but the salvation of the sinner, and this is true whether

it is the case of a single sheep being lost or of a whole flock gone astray. A nation that is lost is like a soul that is lost, something the Son of Man came to seek and to save, something for which the Good Shepherd will offer unwearied search, not feeling the track too rough nor the thorns too sharp, intent only that it shall be at last brought home.

A COMMANDMENT OF THE LORD JESUS.

We have been thinking in this chapter more of what Jesus did about human sin than of what He said about it and we have thought in this way largely because we do not want to be engaged in the prolonged and rather unprofitable task of attacking with texts and then trying to stem the counter-attack. Yet there is one passage of Scripture often quoted in isolation which seems to have special bearing upon the present issue, it is the Lord's commandment about loving one's neighbour. Some idea of what Jesus meant by neighbour is set out in the parable of the Good Samaritan, that member of a nation with whom the Jews had no dealings, who, finding one of the rival nation in distress, ministered to his needs. Jesus appears to have accepted as the right definition of the word neighbour "he who shewed mercy" and, if that be so, we can hardly bring this brief consideration of the Gospel Basis of Pacifism to a close without some comment upon this particular commandment. Of course it may be argued that a war aimed at relieving the world from an evil menace is the surest way of showing mercy. This is a conceivable interpretation provided we are prepared to admit that, had the position been reversed and Jesus had drawn a vivid picture of a battlefield to illustrate His conception of the good neighbour, we would be right in assuming that such a warlike description of His own idea of neighbourliness should be interpreted as really meaning that, when you saw that your enemy was suffering, you should immediately tend his wounds, put him on your own beast and foot the expenses involved in his recovery. Even if we accept the suggestion that the word love would be better rendered "care for", that God so "cared for" the world that He gave His only-begotten Son and that we are commanded to "care

for" our neighbours as ourselves, it still does seem difficult to reconcile such a commandment with the stern facts of modern war. Of course there are those who say that they can kill and love their victim at the same time but, not only are there very few people who desire to experience love when it expresses itself in that particular form, but also there are still fewer who can bring themselves to kill where they can feel no hatred. Granted that an executioner really does feel no hatred, it would yet be unwise to assume that the temperament which makes a good executioner is commonly found in the ordinary layman or even in the clergy. Most people have to hate before they can slay, to wish ill before they can do ill, to cease to be men who care for those whom they are pledged to destroy and to think of their enemies as beasts before they can bring themselves to the point of slaughtering them. Those who assent to war must assent also to the temperament in which wars can alone be fought, willing the end they must will the means, and that involves the recognition of the fact that men who have agreed to kill their fellows may be led into the temptation of saying to such men "Raca" or even risk the Gehenna of fire by exclaiming "Thou fool". Cold-blooded murder may be an unpleasant thing, but it is attractive in comparison with a cold-blooded love that can, in charity, slit the erring brother's throat to save his immortal soul. Some people may be able to go through the experience of war without finding that it necessarily carries with it any temptations to hatred too strong for their resistance. But, when those less fortunate discover that they have ceased to love their neighbours, they have either, for God's ultimate glory, temporarily to set aside His commandments, or to abandon the war that has brought them to this fatal temptation.

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION.

It has been the general purpose of this chapter to indicate some of the difficulties a group of Christian people experience when they are asked to fit modern war into the framework of Christian doctrine. Those who are described as pacifists would not deny that there are religions in which war can

find a proper and an honoured place, but it seems to them that to incorporate it within the Christian Gospel involves so drastic a modification of the significance and nature of that Gospel as to leave it damaged in the very centre of its being. That God deliberately chose the way of reconciliation through the suffering of the guiltless on behalf of the guilty is the Good News we are bidden to preach to all the world and is of a significance no less universal. This Gospel is everywhere and at all times the same and, whatever be the form in which the Church sees fit to give her message in time of war, she must be ready in time of peace to proclaim that same message with the same emphasis. If the Church is clear that violence can be justified on Christian grounds when liberty is at stake and when there seems little hope in any other method, then she must witness to that conviction, not only in England but in India, not only to the prosperous but to the poor, and she cannot modify her declarations simply because statesmen may think that violence is impolitic.

But, before we accept this conception of the Church as the battling Bride of Christ, seizing the weapons of the world and wielding them against evil with a passionate skill, there is another view that demands our urgent consideration. It holds that the Church stands for a wisdom that is wise beyond the knowledge of this tortured world. Like the world, she believes in power; like the world, she believes in glory; but the power and the glory in which she believes she finds in the Gospels, and that it is not what the world means when it talks of glory nor when it thinks of power. And yet it is becoming clear that there is little permanence in the triumphs of the world and in the glittering prizes that it offers, that worldly wisdom is being exposed as a hollow sham and silly trickery, and that man is struggling to get a foothold on the things that do not change. It is for the Church, repentant of past failures and time-serving compromise, to lead men away from a false hope that evil can be destroyed or a new world built while we hesitate to obey Him who alone knows how to re-make the world, since He Himself was its Creator.

So the Church looks in silent awe upon Jesus as He seeks to reconcile—not God to the world, for His love had never been broken—but the world to God, and to win it back

by the power of crucified love. But she does not merely watch the drama of a God who is contented to be given up into the hands of wicked men and to suffer death upon the cross, for she finds herself drawn into a like experience and entering into a fellowship of His sufferings. Calvary is no fenced hill upon which a tragedy is played out; it is the central act of a ministry of reconciliation, but a ministry which, terrible and wonderful though it may seem, is committed also unto us.

CHAPTER III
THE IDEA OF THE JUST WAR

By

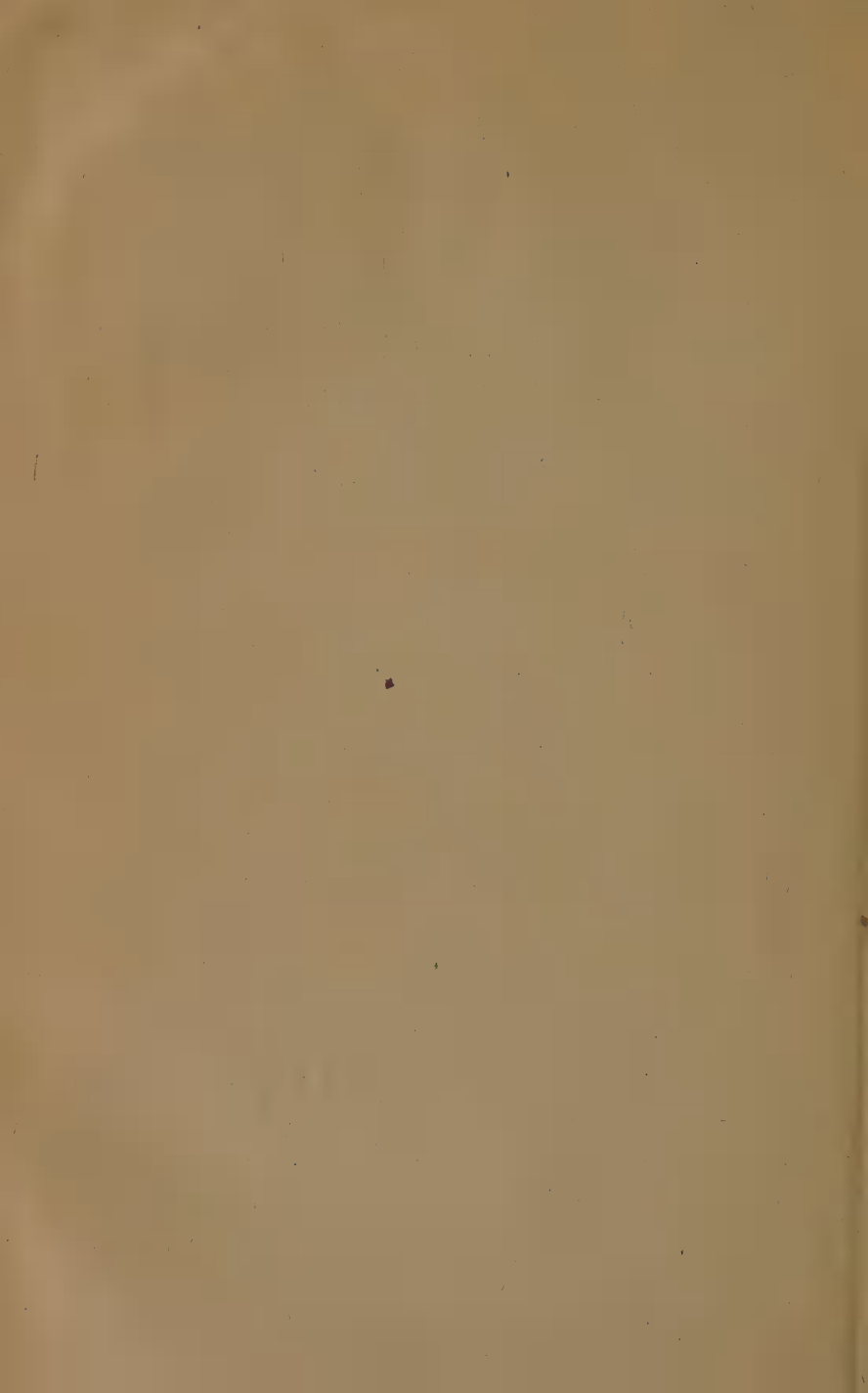
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Appended Note on the practical duty of Christians who
repudiate the Idea of the Just War



CHAPTER III

THE IDEA OF THE JUST WAR

THE last paragraph of No. 37 of the Thirty-Nine Articles reads: "It is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the Magistrate, to wear weapons, and to serve in the wars". This would at first sight appear as an unqualified permission to the Christian to engage in any war whatever, provided that the Magistrate (the Government) orders him to do so. But the Thirty-nine Articles exist also in a Latin version which we may presume to have an authority equal to that of the English version, and this Latin version introduces the adjective "just" before "wars". Since the apparently unqualified permission of the English version would be repudiated by all Christian moralists, it must be assumed that the Latin version gives the key to the meaning of the English version, and that the intention of this Article is to enable Christian men, when the Government requires them to do so, to wear weapons and to serve in *just wars* with a good conscience.

The purpose of this essay, then, must be to examine the meaning of the expression "a just war", and to reconsider the question whether such a conception is tenable in Christian thought.

It is clear from a study of the early Christian Church that the expression "a just war" would have seemed a contradiction in terms to the Christians of the first two or three centuries.

The attitude of the early Church can be divided roughly into three periods. During the first period, from the beginning until about 170 A.D., the whole Church was consistently and absolutely pacifist, and there is no evidence of any Christians serving in the Roman armies. Harnack says that no Christian ever *became* a soldier, though some men already in the Army may not have left immediately on their conversion to Christianity. Justin Martyr quotes Isaiah ii. 3-4, and claims

that so far as Christians are concerned the prophecy was already fulfilled. It has been suggested that the early Christian Church was not pacifist in the true sense of the word, and that it only opposed military service for Christians because they would in the Army be involved in the rites of Emperor-worship. Although the obligation of Emperor-worship gave the Church an additional objection to Army service for Christians, it was certainly not the central objection, which was that Christianity had absolutely renounced war and the shedding of blood. This second objection is made quite clear by the writings of many Christians during the second period.

The second period is from about 170 A.D. until 313. During this period, there is evidence of some Christians serving in the Army, but all Christian writers dealing with the question protest strongly against such service. Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria both imply that Christians are necessarily pacifist. Origen, writing against Celsus, says "We no longer take up the sword against any nation, nor do we learn war any more, having become children of peace for the sake of Jesus Who is our Leader". Celsus himself, attacking the Church, asks a question which strangely resembles one asked by many anti-pacifists to-day: "What would become of the Empire if all its members were Christians and refused to fight?" Tertullian says "Shall it be held lawful to make an occupation of the sword, when the Lord proclaims that he who uses the sword shall perish by the sword? And shall the son of peace take part in battle, when it does not become him even to sue at law? And shall he apply the chain and prison and torture and punishment, who is not the avenger of his own wrongs? How shall a Christian wage war, nay, how shall he even be a soldier in peacetime, without the sword, which the Lord has taken away? For, although soldiers came to John (the Baptist) and received the formula of his rule; although even a centurion believed, the Lord afterwards in disarming Peter ungirded every soldier".

St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, writes: "The whole earth is drenched in the blood of adversaries, and if it happens with State authority, courage is the name for it. . . .

Christians are not allowed to kill, but they must be ready to be put to death themselves”.

Lactantius of Bithynia says: “When God prohibits killing He warns us not to do even those things that are legal among men; and so it will not be lawful for a just man to serve as a soldier.”

A great many soldiers in this period suffered martyrdom, or forsook the Army after conversion to Christianity. It is clear that the official attitude of the Church in this period was that military service might not be undertaken by the Christian, and therefore the question of a “just war” simply did not arise. No kind of war was just for the Christian. Though, as we have seen, some men remained in the Army in spite of this, it is probable that many such had not yet been baptized. Baptism was at this time often postponed by a man until he was on his death-bed, as in the case of the Emperor Constantine himself.

The third period begins from Constantine’s edict of toleration for Christianity in 313, and it was from this time that the conception of a “just war” began slowly to take shape. This came about through the identification of the State with Christianity. It must be conceded that this produced an entirely new problem for the Church. Previously, the wars of the heathen Emperors had been affairs of the worldly world which seemed to be of no concern for the Christian. But now Christianity had become the official religion of the Empire. The State, which had once persecuted, now protected and favoured. How persuasive then must have seemed the argument that Roman armies making war on the barbarians were in effect performing a work which God would approve, in defending Christian civilization against the inroads of heathenism! By such pleas, no doubt, the high ecclesiastics were won over, to whom the Emperors now increasingly turned for advice. And it must also be remembered that the edict of toleration and the conversion of Constantine made Christianity fashionable, caused a mass movement into the Church, and lowered the whole standard of Christian living. It is easy to judge harshly in retrospect. No doubt the Church could and should have guarded her moral life from the blight of prosperity, and faced friendly Caesar with stern and

uncompromising terms. But the temptation to unbend was too strong for the human frailty of a generation of Christians which had only just emerged from what was perhaps the longest and severest of all the persecutions. And so the mischief was done. Constantine, who had won peace for the Christians and power for himself by military victory, was hardly likely to view as un-Christian the means by which he had triumphed, and he contrived to become the arbiter of Christian destinies and even a sort of umpire in Christian controversy, without himself submitting to Christian discipline until death was near at hand.

Even so, the idea of a just war still met with opposition. A few Church Fathers still spoke strongly against military service. In some Dioceses Christians were still forbidden to serve. St. Martin of Tours, so often carelessly spoken of as the "soldier saint", is an interesting example; for it will be remembered that, while he certainly served as a Christian in the Army, he refused on grounds of conscience to fight, when his first battle came along, though he offered to go unarmed in front of the Roman advance. But, apart from these few survivals or exceptions, Christian scruples about war were rapidly being put aside, and a double standard began to arise. Monks and priests were forbidden to serve as soldiers, but service was allowed to all other Christians.

If anything were needed to complete the demolition of the original Christian attitude to war, it was supplied by the prestige of St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, in the fifth century; and he stands out as the first Christian of note to give definite expression to the theory of a just war.

Augustine was fascinated by the internal order and civilization of the Roman Empire, and in his own lifetime he saw it menaced and assailed by the barbarian hordes. To him the armed defence of this order and civilization appeared in no way incompatible with Christian principles, but rather the reverse. In one of his letters he writes: "If the Christian religion condemned wars of every kind, the command given in the Gospel to soldiers asking counsel as to salvation would rather be to cast away their arms and withdraw themselves wholly from military service; whereas the word spoken to such was, 'Do violence to no man, neither accuse any

falsely, and be content with your wages'—the command to be content with their wages manifestly implying no prohibition to continue in the service." It is interesting to note that, in common with many modern critics of pacifism, he appears to ignore the fact that this advice was given by John the Baptist, and gives the impression that the words were spoken by our Lord. Augustine defines a just war as "one that avenges wrongs, when a nation or State has to be punished for refusing to make amends for the wrongs inflicted by its subjects, or to restore what it has seized unjustly". Augustine interprets our Lord's remark about "taking the sword" (Matt. xxvi. 52) as referring solely to recourse to the sword by a private person without the sanction of the State for his action.

From the time of St. Augustine onwards, the idea that some wars were just and allowable for the Christian became a commonplace of thought, and indeed even the double standard referred to above was threatened. Every schoolboy will recall the many examples in the early Middle Ages of prelates taking the field as feudal lords with their following of knights and men-at-arms, equipped themselves not with sword but with battle-axe. Apparently, the theory behind this was that a battle-axe did not shed blood like a sword and was therefore a permissible weapon for those to whom bloodshed was forbidden by reason of ecclesiastical status. The Crusades were throughout supported by the whole weight of the Church's authority as a war eminently just, and with the creation of the military orders of knighthood, a further inroad was made on the double standard, for these were genuine religious orders whose *raison d'être* was exclusively military. St. Francis of Assisi stands out in this period as a shining embodiment of the almost forgotten original Christian attitude. For, though he does not seem to have found it possible to denounce by word the Crusade as an agency for converting the infidel, his action in visiting unarmed and unattended the Court of the Sultan spoke louder than any sermon.

Once the idea of the just war was generally accepted, the problem of the rightful means of conducting such a war had to be faced. Strangely enough, the chief interest seems

to have centred on the lawfulness of the ambush as a method of warfare. St. Augustine decided that "Provided the war be just, it is no concern of justice whether it be carried on openly or by ambushes", and appealed to the precedent of Joshua. The problem, of course, had been whether such deception could be regarded as legitimate. St. Thomas, however, quotes St. Ambrose as stating that there are certain "rights of war and covenants, which ought to be observed even among enemies". The Second Lateran Council of 1139 banned the newly invented crossbow as a form of "frightfulness" which could not be tolerated in Christian warfare. But the prohibition proved unavailing in the face of the proved effectiveness of the crossbow.

St. Thomas Aquinas summed up in a clear form the position reached by moral theology on the question of war. Quoting freely from St. Augustine, he lays down three requisites for a just war.

First, it must be waged by the authority of the sovereign. In support of this, he cites Romans xiii. 4, ignoring the fact that the application of this passage was clearly to the authority of the sovereign over the citizens under his jurisdiction. St. Thomas's emphasis on this requisite was, however, important in an age when baronial wars were still common in Europe.

Secondly, a just cause is necessary.

Thirdly, there must be a rightful intention, which could be defined as the advancement of good or the avoidance of evil. He describes those who wage war justly as aiming at peace and opposed only to the evil peace which our Lord came *not* to send upon earth (Matt. x. 34). Here St. Thomas ignores the context of our Lord's saying, which shows it as referring not to wars between nations but to the disruptive effect of the Gospel on families in which some are Christian and others not.

St. Thomas stresses as the primary duty of a ruler the preservation of the unity which is called peace, and consequently the protection of his country against the perils of invasion.

Rebellion against the ruler is only justified if he is a tyrant, and then because the rule of tyrants is not ordained for the common good but for the private benefit of the ruler himself.

St. Thomas reaffirms very definitely the double standard. He allows clerics to urge other men to engage in just wars, and even describes this as their duty, but they must not in any circumstances fight themselves, by reason of their special status and functions. He represents the command to Peter to put up his sword into its sheath as one addressed to him as a cleric, and therefore to all clerics.

The work of moral theology on the question of war has since the time of St. Thomas consisted merely of the development and application of the principles laid down by him. Anglican moral theology (such as there is) has tended to follow Roman Catholic moral theology on the problems arising out of war, and therefore a brief statement of the modern Roman position may be helpful. The following is an outline of the passage on "War" in Slater's *Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, Part V, Chapter VI, pp. 206-208:

In ordinary cases, defensive war is always lawful, and offensive war may be lawful if certain conditions are fulfilled. St. Thomas's just cause is held to cover the following cases: the retaking of a conquered country or rebellious province, the avenging of a grave insult or injury offered to the State, the freeing of the unjustly oppressed, or the overcoming of an infidel State's refusal to allow the Gospel to be preached in its dominions.

While some authorities hold that a probability of right is sufficient to make a war lawful, the general opinion is that there must be a "more probable" right or even a moral certainty.

Conscripts, or soldiers voluntarily enlisted before the outbreak of war, may presume that their country is in the right unless it is evident that it is in the wrong, and if in doubt are bound to obey the commands of their lawful superiors. Volunteers not enlisted before the outbreak of war must satisfy their consciences that it is lawful before taking part in it.

Any method of warfare is lawful, provided that it is not against the law of nature and international law or agreement. But international agreements are only binding if the other side also adheres to them faithfully. If one side breaks such agreement, the other side is entitled to break it too.

The persons and property of non-combatants must be spared as far as possible. Enemy merchantmen and neutral vessels trading with the enemy may be captured and made lawful prizes. Booty of war on land is limited to military provisions and stores. Private property on land may not be captured and confiscated, but duly qualified agents of an invading army are entitled to requisition men for labour, and also money, victuals, etc. With these exceptions, enemy private property may not be appropriated.

If this statement represents all the guidance that moral theology can give us about war, it merely advertises its own bankruptcy on the subject. Nor is the situation rendered less fantastic by the semi-infallibility which attaches to these pronouncements. For they represent the opinions of the divines of best repute; and a consensus of the opinions of such divines is regarded by the Roman Catholic Church as authoritative, with at least the suggestion of an imprimatur from the Holy Spirit. Yet the pronouncements summarized above are several hundred years behind the times, do not touch the heart of the problem, and seem extraordinarily remote from the Mind of Christ.

Let us consider these charges. In the first place, there are grave difficulties about the emphasis on declaration of war by the Sovereign and the condemnation of rebellion except against a "tyrant". For, as we have seen, the term "tyrant" does not cover the rule of any Government which is opposed by a section of its subjects. The tyrant is one who rules solely for his private benefit, not seeking the benefit of his subjects. A government which rules over a population of alien race against their will cannot therefore be described as a tyrant, if (as is probable) it can make out a case for its sovereignty as being exercised for their ultimate benefit. The question of their consent to be so ruled is irrelevant. If they rebel, their rebellion is not a just war. If the rebels succeed temporarily in freeing their province, the government's effort to reconquer it is a just war. In fact, Divine sanction is given to the *status quo*, however inequitable such a *status quo* may be in the light of modern views about self-determination. The rebellion of the Dutch against Spain, the struggle of Parliament against Charles I, the Great

Rebellion of 1688, the French Revolution, the unification of Italy in its successive stages during the nineteenth century, all the revolutions of 1848, the various revolts of Poland against Russia, the Irish struggle for freedom, and the break-away of the Czechs and Slovaks and Southern Slavs from Austrian and Hungarian rule can all be described as falling under the Divine disapproval, as can even the throwing off of Turkish rule by the Balkan nations. But the attempts to put down any of these risings were "just wars".

Again, war might justly be declared against Saudi Arabia, Tibet, or Sikkim, on the ground that these States do not permit the preaching of the Gospel within their confines.

But perhaps the most impressive justification for the unleashing of the hounds of war, for the slaughter of millions, the destruction of cities, and the paralysis of all peaceful enterprise, is that of the Insulted Diplomat. For an insult to a country's representative can be (and has been) construed as a grave insult offered to the State. There is something stupendous about this native dignity of diplomats. Insult a policeman and you will be dismissed with a caution; insult a judge and you may be committed for a few days' imprisonment for contempt of court; insult a Prime Minister, and you may be arrested, released on bail, and fined five shillings next morning by the magistrate. But insult a foreign diplomat and the penalty will be a Just War waged against you and all your fellow countrymen with Divine approval! The Dey of Algiers learned the truth of this to his cost when he slapped the envoy of Charles X with his fan in a fit of petulance, and thereby laid the foundation stone of France's North African Empire.

The divines say that a war of defence is always justified, a war of offence only in certain circumstances. But a maxim which achieves ever-increasing popularity with the years is that which says that the best means of defence is to attack. If a country watches a neighbour piling up vast armaments against her and making careful preparations for a large-scale invasion, does she deprive her own cause of *all* righteousness, and invest her adversary with the argument of a Just War, because she decides to forestall the planned aggression by

attacking first? If Finland had attacked the Russian forces massed on her frontier at a time propitious to her and before the Russian preparations were quite completed, could Russia have claimed (if she had wanted to!) that her war was a "just one" in the eyes of the Church?

The moral theologians seem particularly bland when they stress the importance of the people of a country being satisfied of the justice of the cause. One would like to be told of a war in history in which the combatants on both sides were not satisfied that their cause was just. The recent war between Italy and Abyssinia was a striking example. Most of the civilized world had not the slightest doubt that the Italian aggression could claim no shadow of justification; yet not only the Italian people but even the Bishops and clergy of the Church in Italy were firmly convinced that theirs was a "just war" in the full moral-theological meaning of the expression. The State propaganda machine, with all the resources of modern invention at its command, has in fact the power to satisfy its population of the "justice" of any war, however unpromising the task might at first sight appear. In these circumstances, it is very hard for the citizen of the modern State to come to an independent and impartial decision on the merits of his country's cause. He seldom has the material for forming such a decision. The facts which he has to work on have been carefully selected for him by the Ministry of Propaganda, or, in a democratic State, by the proprietor of his newspaper. He has no means of knowing whether they are true. Other and inconvenient facts have probably been suppressed. The same careful selection has been applied to the opinions from foreign countries which he is allowed to read in his newspapers. Comments unfavourable to his country's case are not often quoted. The atmosphere in which he has to do his thinking is heavily charged with one-sided prejudice. Even if the facts were clearly and impartially presented to the people, only a tiny minority are capable of relevant and logical thought about any highly emotional situation. The great majority will find themselves obliged to adopt the attitude which the moral theologians impose upon conscripts: that they can presume that their country is in the right, and when in doubt must obey the

commands of their lawful superiors (who have engaged the country in war and control the propaganda machine).

But if, as has been shown, it is impossible for the ordinary citizen to decide whether a war is just or not, the whole idea of a just war falls to the ground. For such an idea essentially depends on the ability of the average individual conscience to discriminate and to exercise free choice.

At first sight, the modern position of the moral theologians concerning methods of warfare shows some advance on St. Thomas and his preoccupation with the lawfulness of ambushes and battles fought on holy days of obligation. Something would appear to be gained by their recognition that there are methods of warfare so repugnant to both Christian and humanitarian feeling that their use by a belligerent empties that nation's cause of its justice. Actually, however, the development is entirely in the direction of Old Testament or worldly morality. It is simply an application of the *lex talionis* which Christ superseded. It is true that you are morally bound to observe the etiquette of polite warfare. But, if the enemy infringes it, you are entitled to reply in kind. Nor is there any guidance by which the Christian may decide who has infringed it first. For we know by experience how easy it is for a belligerent to manufacture an example of infringement by the enemy in order to free his own hand; and the propaganda machine does the rest.

Theoretically, again, a belligerent deprives his cause of justice if he does not exercise every reasonable effort to spare the persons and property of non-combatants. But modern warfare knows no such discrimination. It is not only a matter of the bombing and machine-gunning of civilians. There may be an attempt on both sides to avoid this, for fear of reprisals and the consequent weakening of the people's *morale*. But both sides in any modern war are irrevocably committed to economic warfare, which seeks to strike at the enemy government through the starvation and material ruin of the civilian population.

The irresistible conclusion of this examination is that, whether or not any war in history satisfied the conditions for a just war, as laid down by the moral theologians, it is impossible for a war fought under modern conditions to do so.

But, if no war can satisfy these conditions, then no war can be accounted just in the moral-theological sense. The permission accorded to Christians by the moral theologians to take part in war is limited by them to such wars as fulfil their requirements. But, if no wars fulfil their requirements, the permission automatically lapses. It becomes no longer lawful for the Christian to take part in any war "at the commandment of the Magistrate"; and this is the logical outcome not of an appeal to Christ Himself over the heads of the moral theologians, but of the very principles of the moral theologians themselves.

There is plenty of room, of course, for criticism of their principles on Christian grounds. One might be pardoned for pointing out that their insistence on a nation's rights, dignity, and material interests is not merely a triumphant invasion of Christianity by the legal outlook, but is redolent of the worldly world and remote from the Mind and attitude of our Lord. But one should remember that their task of reconciling war with Christian morality was an impossible one from the outset. From that point in the fourth century when the minds of ecclesiastics first toyed with the notion that good ends might in certain cases be rightfully pursued by evil means, and that Christians might be morally justified in employing methods of mass-violence out of harmony with the Christian Gospel, the course of future development was inescapable. Though one may suspect that the moral theologians have found themselves under compulsion to justify after the event every war to which the Church has at any time in history given its official blessing, including most of the Crusades, the War against the Albigenses, the Spanish Armada, and the campaigns of the Popes as temporal sovereigns against rival principalities, the working out in practical application of the original principle that a just war is possible has been inevitable, and not illogical. It is all the more cause for marvel that a movement of thought which started from the possibility of a just war, and which went on to justify almost all wars in history, has in this present age been confronted with the impossibility of a just war, according to its own reasoning.

The divines who first decided that some wars might be

accounted just could not be expected to foresee all the consequences of their decision. The truth is that any general principle in the field of morals is bound to be fraught with unknown future danger. That is not to say that no such principles should be enunciated. But it ought to be frankly faced that a general principle cannot always be a complete embodiment of the Mind of Christ, and that the course of history or the particular circumstances of a case may even succeed in reversing it. A parallel principle to that of the Just War, which is often employed in support of it, is that which says that the Christian confronted with a choice between two evils must choose the lesser. It is a useful principle to apply in many problems, but it does not wholly embody the Mind of Christ and in certain circumstances it breaks down. The case of war is an example of its failure. Yet it is often employed to justify war. It is said that war is an evil lesser than that of the unchecked flourishing of heresy or injustice or tyranny, or of a régime that persecutes Christianity or freedom of conscience, or that menaces a nation's independence. But such an argument rests on assumptions which may be faulty. The estimate of the evils consequent on war may be an underestimate. The estimate of the evils of the alternative to war may be exaggerated. Where, in fact, the full extent of the rival evils cannot be foreseen and the choice between them has to be made in conditions of emotional excitement, the principle of the lesser evil breaks down. Further, it is easy to see what a plausible case could be made out under this principle for the summoning by our Lord of the legions of angels in Gethsemane, or at least for an organized insurrection by the thousands of His supporters in order to avert the Passion. Yet He chose what appeared to His disciples to be the greater evil, He alone knowing that it was actually the lesser.

Let me give a brief summary of the position at which we have arrived. Christian moral theology began by saying that no war could be a "just" one for the Christian to take part in. At a certain point in history it started to abandon this position and to say that some wars were "just", and that the Christian could take part in these. It proceeded to lay down certain conditions which must be satisfied if a war

was to be accounted "just". In the circumstances of modern warfare, these conditions cannot be fulfilled. So no modern war can be regarded as a "just" war, and therefore no Christian should take part in a modern war.

APPENDED NOTE

ON THE PRACTICAL DUTY OF CHRISTIANS WHO REPUDIATE THE IDEA OF THE JUST WAR ¹

Suppose that a Christian commits himself in good faith to active participation in a war, and then realizes, and finds himself compelled by conscience and intellect to accept, the position outlined above. What is he to do? He has become in effect a convinced pacifist so far as modern warfare is concerned. Must he at once abandon his participation in the war? This is by no means an academic issue. It may be happening to many at the present time.

It is hardly necessary to insist that every Christian must in the last resort obey the command of his conscience. But that does not absolve him from the duty of careful thought. Conscience ought not to be a blind irrational force. It should be illumined by the most careful consideration of fact and principle. If the man has become a pacifist by force of conscience, it does not necessarily follow that conscience must bid him cease to take part in the war. There is a useful working rule in moral problems of this kind which allows a period of grace to the Christian (if that is necessary for the fulfilling of really vital existing commitments) before he must translate his heart's response to the claims of his religion into a response in action. An employee, who supports a wife and children on his wages and suddenly discovers that the business of his firm conflicts in some way with Christian moral principle, is not required to abandon his employment immediately, if that entails the reducing of his wife and children to penury. He has a responsibility towards them

¹ This appended note by the author of Chapter III expresses his personal opinion on some very difficult practical problems. This opinion is not shared by most of the members of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship; but the Executive of the Fellowship gladly agreed to its publication as a valuable contribution to the thinking out of the problem.—*Ed.*

which it is his moral duty to fulfil. In the case of a war, the responsibility may be much greater. For his sudden withdrawal might be helping to imperil not only his fellow-countrymen (as yet unconverted to his position and counting on him), but also the peoples of other nations who are depending for their existence on the war effort of his nation.

There is a good case, then, for maintaining that it is his duty to fulfil his commitments to others before he can allow himself to translate his newly acquired convictions completely into action. That is to say, pledged though he is to pacifism, he may yet have to continue to take an active part in the war until it is over, and the threat to those who depend on him is at an end. Thenceforward, he will be free to bring the whole of his life into harmony with his pacifist convictions.

Such counsels as this may be open to serious criticism. Many Christian pacifists would denounce it as an unworthy compromise. To carry it out would certainly involve a man in considerable strain. We always tend to be impatient of delay, anxious as we are to see the immediate impact of our moral decisions on current events. But consideration of the interests of others (or of what they consider to be their interests) is as much a response to the claims of Christ as is the carrying out of His Will in one's own life. Further, Christians can surely afford to take a long view in moral questions, and must refuse to be hypnotized by the seeming urgency of current events. If God can wait long, so can they; and if they remain inwardly loyal to His Will, with consciences not drugged and with the intention of giving full outward obedience at the earliest opportunity, then surely they are doing what He requires of them.

There is one other issue, which is really an extension of this last one. Can pacifists generally, whether or not they are taking active part in a war and whether or not they were pacifists before the war began, approve or at least acquiesce in its continuance? Should they agitate, in season and out of season, for the cessation of hostilities and the opening of negotiations with the enemy for peace at any price? Should they do all that they can to swing the country over to pacifism by demonstrations, propaganda literature, personal canvassing of young men about to be called up, and so forth? Or, on the

other hand, would it be right for them to regard their pacifist principles as inapplicable, once war has broken out, and consequently to postpone the attempt to apply them until the war is over?

So much depends on the circumstances that it is impossible to lay down an arbitrary general rule. The factor of responsibility for others may, however, be the deciding one. The pacifist is entitled to protest against any undertaking being given by the Government of his country in peace time to aid another country by force of arms. If the Government gives such an undertaking in spite of protests, pacifists would be entitled to agitate for a formal repudiation of it, so long as no aggression had as yet been committed against the other country. But the position is surely somewhat altered if the aggression takes place and the Government finds itself called upon to redeem its pledge of assistance. In such a case, however misguided pacifists may feel the original pledge of assistance to have been, they are bound to recognize that the nation to which it was given and which is now being attacked is in the position of a dependant; and there is therefore a good case for arguing that pacifists are not morally entitled to engage in any agitation which, if it succeeded, would involve a betrayal of the dependant's faith in their country's pledge.

On the other hand, and even if this argument were acted upon, it would hardly follow that pacifist principles should be "pigeonholed" until after the war. There would need to be an attempt to harmonize them, so far as possible, with the pledge given. This might be achieved by the seeking of peace at the earliest possible juncture, provided that the peace sought would not involve the sacrifice of the dependent nation; by the effort to preserve a detachment from the passions of war; and by a jealous guarding from extinction of those Christian ideals of which war is the negation.

Within the bounds of these conditions pacifists might be justified in tolerating the war's continuance. It would not, of course, thereby become a "just" war. It would, in fact, be a choosing of the lesser evil. We have seen that the application of the "lesser evil" test to war is dangerous, because it is virtually impossible to estimate which is the lesser evil. In this particular case, however, the choice between alternative

evils is in some degree shackled by the pledge given to the dependent nation. With the giving of that pledge, the dependant's estimate of which is the lesser evil has been adopted by the protector nation. It may be a false estimate; but it is an integral part of the bond entered into between the two nations. The protector nation has solemnly informed the dependent nation that she accepts the latter's estimate that armed resistance is a lesser evil than submission to aggression. There would therefore be a case for arguing that she was morally bound to stand by the dependant's estimate of the lesser evil, unless she had formally repudiated it (and the pledge) before the emergency became acute.

The individual pacifist would need to consult his conscience as to whether he could take an active part in war in such circumstances. He might reasonably plead that it is one thing to tolerate and acquiesce in the continuance of the war as a necessary evil for the time being, and quite another to feel so acutely his personal share of responsibility for a pledge given by his Government that he is ready to violate his deepest convictions in order to help carry it out. That indeed is the standpoint of many conscientious objectors at the present time.

CHAPTER IV

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN PACIFISM

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CHAPTER IV

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN PACIFISM

FEW men can or should be philosophers: but all right conduct must have as its basis a philosophy. In other words it must belong to a coherent and reasonable view of the whole meaning and significance of reality. Any philosophy must, so far as possible, take into account all known facts: the distinctive feature of Christian philosophy is that it accepts as facts the great Divine acts of the Incarnation and the Atonement—facts which, if true, are of necessity more important and significant than any other facts are or could be. The distinction is admirably expressed by Fr. E. L. Strong of Calcutta: "Pagan philosophers, who knew not Christ, set out to discover what God is like by means of their own wisdom. They did discover much, for they were aided by the Spirit of God, who strives to enlighten every man. Yet they could not attain to know God. Christian philosophers began or should begin from the revelation of Himself which God has given in Christ, and try to find out more and more of its meaning."¹ The writers of this book assume the truth of the Christian faith, and their philosophy therefore takes as its central fact the revelation in Jesus Christ of the true nature both of God and man.

Underlying the whole message of the New Testament lies the Old Testament truth of the Creator-hood of God; and the Church places in the forefront of her Creed belief in God as "Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible". This is important because, as we shall see later, it rules out any ultimate dualism in which the power of God might be challenged by some evil power equal to or greater than His own. But it equally rules out any ultimate dualism of "matter" and "spirit" such as is taught by some other religions. For the Christian there can never be any belief that the use of material means for spiritual

¹ *The Teaching of Christ Concerning Prayer*, p. 20.

ends is wrong or that the material world in itself is evil. Ideas of this kind are often attributed to pacifists, because they did creep in to the thought of Tolstoy and some of his followers; but they are inconsistent with the orthodox beliefs about the creation and the Incarnation, and the Christian philosopher will repudiate them without any hesitation.

The Christian Creed also attributes to God the characteristic of omnipotence. He is described as "almighty" or "all-sovereign". This does not of course mean that He "can do everything", which would be a senseless affirmation, but that He can do whatever He wills to do—that there is no outside power which is capable of over-ruling His power. But Christian thinkers have not always recognized that the revelation of God in Christ has thrown an entirely new light on the significance of omnipotence. The pre-Christian Jews believed in Divine omnipotence and would have accepted without demur our Lord's saying "With God all things are possible". But their general tendency was to think of Him as a super-despot who would impose His will by trampling His enemies under His feet and thus exercising lordship over them. Thus the Messianic hope of God's final victory was commonly expected to find its fulfilment in a warrior-King of irresistible might. It was the refusal of Jesus to fulfil this role which led to the rejection of His Messianic claim. By a strange paradox He Who claimed to be the revelation of the Father was one who was despised and rejected of men—one who was pre-eminently the Man of Sorrows and who died a felon's death rather than call down legions of angels to overpower His foes. In the striking phrase of Archbishop D'Arcy, He revealed that "Calvary is the mode of the Divine Omnipotence". Men had tended to think of power in terms of quantity: but He led His followers to think of it in terms of quality. He showed that the Love which attracts is more powerful than the violence which crushes. A great Christian philosopher of our own time has finely expressed the significance of all this: "The divine omnipotence consists in the all-compelling power of goodness and love to enlighten the grossest darkness and to melt the hardest heart."¹ In fact

¹ Pringle-Pattison: *The Idea of God*, p. 411.

Jesus has revealed to us that the love of God is the power of God.¹

The great difficulty in believing in the omnipotence of a righteous God is inevitably to be found in the fact of moral evil. The simplest of minds are aware of this problem as the question is asked "Why does God allow this or that or the other evil?" Behind that inquiry lies the unconscious need for a philosophy which can retain belief in God's holiness without surrendering belief in His power. Those who endeavour to think out such a philosophy while thinking of divine power in quantitative terms can only produce belief in a deity who maintains his sovereignty by inflicting endless torment on his enemies or by annihilating them entirely. Both these theories have been held by Christian teachers: yet always there was the lurking doubt whether a deity so conceived could be identical with "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ". Often, indeed, such thinking has led to popular heresy, either by destroying the unity of the Godhead in the picture of the merciful Son pacifying His angry Father, or by concentrating the attribute of justice in God and the attribute of mercy in our Lady.

If, however, we interpret Divine power qualitatively—as Divine Love in action—we see that the omnipotence of God is to be found in the attractive power of a Love that forgives through suffering, and therefore conquers evil by transmuting it into good. Herein lies the essential Gospel—"good news"—of Christianity, that the power of God has been manifested in redemptive love for sinners: "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

It would, however, be a complete misreading of the Christian revelation if we pictured the redemptive Love of

¹ In asserting this, I do not mean that "love" and "power" are precisely identical. That is manifestly untrue; and, as Dr. Temple points out in *Christianity and the State* (pp. 32-33) in human experience "the two do not vary together". But there we are concerned with the effect of finite love on material external to itself. It is otherwise with Divine Love in contact with the created world which depends on that Love for its very existence. Even in that sphere it may be true that "force" could have prevented our Lord's Crucifixion, which His Love could not prevent. But in that fact is the supreme revelation of the truth that "the weakness of God is stronger than men" because it is the "weakness" of all-conquering Love.

God in action *only* in the historic life of Jesus of Nazareth: this is seen as opening the way for its continued activity in human life—in a word, for “the grace of God”; for the essential meaning of that theological phrase is that the Divine power is constantly manifested in the activity of the Holy Spirit transforming sinners by the force of God’s love and forgiveness.

It is no less important that our philosophy should give due place to the Christian doctrine of man. The Old Testament had taught that man is created in the image of God; therefore his ethical ideal is to be like God. In the Old Testament the stress is specially laid on the righteousness and holiness of the Lord: man therefore is to walk justly because God is righteous, and to be holy, for He is holy. Thus emerges the vision in the Benedictus of the ideal state wherein the people of God, being delivered out of the hand of their enemies, might serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of their life. But Jesus’ enrichment of the idea of God brings a corresponding enrichment of the ethical ideal. St. Peter is rebuked because He thinks not like God, but like men (St. Matt. xvi. 23). The disciples are to be perfect as their Father in heaven is perfect: and that perfection is particularly manifested in His Love to the undeserving; He makes His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sends His rain alike on the just and the unjust (Matt. v. 44-48). Since the character of God is most fully revealed in the forgiveness of sinners, forgiveness without limit is likewise the high-water mark of man’s ethical ideal (Matt. vi. 14-15; xviii. 21-22); and the ethic of giving love only to those from whom love is received is explicitly rejected as inconsistent with the fuller revelation of truth which Jesus has taught.

The true ethical ideal for man is then to be like God—or, in other words, to be Christlike, since in Christ we see the glory of the Father. But this requires fuller analysis. Our human life is made up of a number of relationships—to God, to one another, to unseen spiritual beings, and to the world of nature. But since we were created by and for God, our relationship to Him must be primary. God has revealed Himself to us as our Father: therefore the primary status

of each of us is to be a child of God. A man may be a craftsman or an artist or a musician, which means that he as a being at once spiritual and material is able to stand in spiritual and material relationship to that part of creation which is the proper sphere of his art or craft. He may be an employer or an employee, a member of Parliament or a town clerk, which means that he stands in a particular relationship to some of his fellow-men. He may be an Englishman or a Chinese or an Abyssinian, which means that he is one of a group of human beings in a particular relationship to other groups. But obviously each of these relationships is secondary in comparison with the primary status of each as the child of God. Moreover, all these other relationships divide men into separate groups—cultural, social, political, racial—over against one another, whereas our common status as children of God is something which unites. Thus the great Apostle of the Gentiles could exultantly proclaim that for those who through Christ have realized their true status as the children of God there is neither Greek nor Jew, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free (Col. iii. 2). Our Lord's own recognition of this fact is apparent in His own attitude to people, which was marked by a complete indifference to the relationships which divide men. He included in His chosen group of twelve Apostles both the fervent Nationalist Simon the Zealot and Matthew who was so indifferent to the claims of patriotism that he was ready to make his living by collecting taxes for the foreign power which had robbed his country of its freedom. He startled His disciples by holding a friendly conversation with the woman of Samaria. He was ready to talk on friendly terms with Pontius Pilate, who not only was the representative of a pagan and militarist Empire, but had himself won notoriety by an act of savage cruelty when he mingled the blood of the Galileans with their sacrifices. He taught the meaning of love to one's neighbour by telling a story in which the villains were a priest and a Levite and the hero belonged to the despised Samaritans whom the Jews regarded as the bitterest enemies alike of their nation and their religion—rather as if a modern Anglican preacher should tell a story with a bishop and a priest as the villains and a "good Nazi" as the hero! He even used the same word "Woman" in

addressing His own Mother and in addressing an adulteress. It is small wonder that His friends and acquaintances were scandalized. But all the time He was simply demonstrating that He respected *every* man and woman, because He saw each one as primarily the child of God.

It was because of this that He gave to the world a new sense of the value of the individual: and it is interesting to observe that this conviction is only maintained by those who see men primarily in their relationship to God. Niebuhr acutely observes that "it is an instructive fact that our age, which began with the substitution of humanism for theism as a more direct and unambiguous method of protecting human values, ends in a series of international and fratricidal struggles in which the common human dignity is outraged. Amid such struggles men as men have no rights at all. Their humanity is recognized only in its functional relationship to the national or other political causes to which they are related".¹ This tragic fact is peculiarly apparent in the highly-organized and mechanical society of to-day. As soon as it is forgotten that each individual is the child of God, he becomes a "hand" in a factory—an instrument to produce wealth—or a unit in a political party, whose only value is to further some "ideology"—or a cog in the military machine. Thus we can be told in war communiqués that "the damage done was inconsiderable, *but* there were a few fatal casualties". Berdyaev has expressed the truth with brutal frankness: "man, desiring no longer to be the image of God, becomes the image of the machine."²

Man cannot, however, be a *mere* individual, for such a being is a sheer impossibility. Individuality can only develop and flourish within a community. Yet, as Bergson has argued with such force in his great work on the two sources of religion and morality, humanist ethics can only produce societies (national or other) arrayed against each other: it is only through religion—through the activity of God towards all His children—that there can exist a catholic community in which all men, united by their status as the children of God, can develop in harmony their full individuality. This

¹ Niebuhr: *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, p. 241.

² Berdyaev: *The Fate of Man in the Modern World*, p. 26.

explains the interesting fact—unparalleled in any other religion—that belief in the Holy Catholic Church forms an integral part of the historic Christian Creed. It is only in the fellowship of that great God-centred community that the true nature of man—of every man—can be realized. Truly interpreted, the old saying “Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus” is a plain statement of a vitally important truth.

Hitherto we have been concerned with the fundamental bases of Christian philosophy in relation to the Doctrine of God and of man; and—except for incidental references—we have not considered any of the specific problems of peace and war. To these we must now turn our attention. But let us first insist that these difficult matters which so sorely perplex the minds of Christian thinkers to-day can only be rightly examined if we keep our fundamental principles constantly in view. Happily we can begin with a large measure of agreement. Probably every Anglican would readily endorse the declaration of the Lambeth Conference, 1930, that “War as a method of settling international disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ”. And it is significant that at the great international and interdenominational Conference on Church, Community, and State at Oxford in 1937 both the pacifist and non-pacifist sections accepted the statement that “War involves compulsory enmity, diabolical outrage against human personality, and a wanton distortion of the truth. War is a particular demonstration of the power of sin in this world, and a defiance of the righteousness of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and Him crucified”.¹ Further, it is obvious that no loyal Christian could ever countenance a war of aggression (though it is only fair in this connexion to recognize the extreme difficulty of defining “aggression”). The Rev. Hugh Martin, in a pamphlet in November, 1939, stating the case against pacifism, writes “The war of aggression, of which all nations have been guilty in the past, is impossible to-day for the Christian conscience”.² It is also common ground to all Christians that war *alone* is incapable of overcoming moral and spiritual evil; that can only be done by spiritual forces of good.

¹ *The Churches Survey Their Task*, p. 178.

² Martin: *The Christian as Soldier*, p. 20.

Wherein then lies the moral problem of to-day? There are in the world to-day forces of evil which are openly hostile to the Christian way of life and the Christian standard of values. The State is set up as an end in itself, claiming from its subjects the unlimited obedience which the Christian believes is rightly due to God alone. The State enforces its will regardless of moral principles. It takes to itself the control of the printed word, so that all publications shall inculcate its false doctrines. It uses the radio with its vast powers of suggestion to the same end. It controls the education of the young, not only by orientating all the teaching in schools for its own ends, but also by prohibiting all voluntary youth organizations which might counteract its doctrines. It either subjects the Christian Church to persecution, as in Soviet Russia, or it restricts its activities and discredits its work, as in Nazi Germany. It uses any and every method of silencing opposition. It has its highly organized secret police, which is prepared to employ both physical and psychological torture. It is ready to degrade the character of its opponents, as Japan endeavours to emasculate Chinese opposition by fostering the drug habit. Behind it all is the glorification of brute force, and the most blatant assertion of undiluted militarism. Personal liberty is scorned. Further, such methods prove in practice to achieve a high degree of success. The youth of several countries seems to have succumbed to this propaganda; and young people are dedicating their great natural qualities of courage and enthusiasm and devotion with a pseudo-religious fervour to the propagation of these false ideals and the service of the leaders by whom they are focussed and controlled. It seems to be impossible to reason with these leaders; nor can anyone negotiate with them, since they hold themselves free from any obligation to keep their pledged word.

It would of course be foolish to attribute *all* the blame for these evils to those who are apparently responsible. Justice requires that we should probe into the historical and psychological origins of these false doctrines: and it is clear that in some measure the victims of these evil forces must share the blame for their existence. Yet even that is in a sense irrelevant to the practical issue which confronts the Christian.

He can and should refuse to usurp the prerogative of God by acting as the judge of sinners. But he cannot be guilty of passive acquiescence in evil without being disloyal to our Lord: to stand aside and do nothing while young people in one country after another are being morally and spiritually perverted would be the meanest and most cowardly form of sin. The situation as it confronts the honest Christian is a challenge to action.

We have stated the problem in terms of the situation to-day because it is impossible to consider moral problems in a vacuum. The world may have set quite different problems to the Christian of the first three centuries or of the Middle Ages: it may present yet others to the Church 500 years hence. But *our* concern is to find a philosophy which will enable us to meet the situation to-day in the light of the eternal truth revealed in Jesus Christ.

We return to the challenge: what is the right Christian response to this mighty array of force directed to evil ends? The common answer which we are given is that "force can only be met by force": even though it is admitted that force cannot overcome evil, it can at least restrain it. Nor need we fear that in appealing to force we are thereby accommodating ourselves to the standards of those whom we feel called to oppose; for we are reminded that it is not unchristian to use material means for moral ends. The important thing is not *whether* we use "force" but *why* we use it. Thus Mr. Martin argues "The policeman using the weapons of the gangster to suppress the gangster does not himself become a gangster".¹ But is this quite as clear as it seems at first glance? Let us slightly modify Mr. Martin's sentence—"The policeman using the weapons of the poisoner to suppress the poisoner does not himself become a poisoner". Would not every Christian feel instinctively that such a proposition was fallacious? Do we not all believe that it represents a real moral advance that we have relegated the rack and the thumbscrew to museums of antiquities? We disapprove to-day of the Inquisition not primarily because we doubt the motives of the inquisitors (who were often sincere devotees of truth) nor because we think that some of its victims were innocent,

¹ Martin: *The Christian as Soldier*, p. 17.

but because the *quality* of the force used was not congruous with the character of Christ. In other words, the inquisitors made the same mistake as those who visualized the Messiah as a warrior-King: they conceived of power in terms of quantity rather than quality, and thought they could neutralize the evil effects of false doctrine by a display of superior physical force—as if the Christians had tried to meet the evil which caused the death of Stephen by stoning Saul of Tarsus and so restraining him from further persecution! This principle of the quality of force was admirably enunciated by Archbishop Davidson, in his protest in the House of Lords against the measures adopted in Ireland by the Black and Tans in 1920–21: “the disciplined forces of the Crown, appointed to suppress disorder, have themselves . . . given terrible examples of the very kind of disorder which they are sent there to suppress: . . . you cannot justifiably punish wrong-doing by lawlessly doing the like. Not by calling in the devil will you cast out devils or punish devilry.” There is immense food for thought in Berdyaev’s judgment on this matter: “In the history of the world nothing has ever been fully realized, in the true or ontological sense of the word, because the means to which recourse was had in order to attain the spiritual life obscured in some measure the ends to be achieved. . . . Violence and hate were justified by an appeal to the lofty ends which they were intended to achieve. God himself was forgotten in favour of the approach designed to lead men to Him. Men set themselves to hate in the cause of love, to use compulsion in the name of freedom, and to become practising materialists for the vindication of spiritual principles.”¹

Let us then accept the proposition that “force must be met by force”: but we must proceed to examine the quality of the force required. It is easy to see the grounds on which we reject the opinion that “defensive war” comes within the category. Part of the evil which we have to meet lies in the fact that the evil systems treat human beings not in their primary status as children of God, but in the light of some secondary relationship. When we go to war we invariably treat multitudes of our fellow-men either as people whom

¹ Berdyaev: *Freedom and the Spirit*, p. 43.

it is our duty to kill or maim, or as "enemy aliens" whom it is our duty to intern, or as people on whom we may have to inflict starvation because their country must be blockaded. We even treat the citizens of countries for whose "freedom" we are fighting as persons whom we may reluctantly have to starve in order to defeat "the enemy". We drop bombs which must at times involve the death or injury of women and children, because military necessity requires us to destroy munitions factories, and it is outside the power of the bombing pilot so to restrict the scope of his bombs that innocent civilians shall not be hit.

Another of the evils which we have to meet is the substitution of one-sided propaganda for the disinterested pursuit of truth. A nation at war cannot allow the free circulation of opinions (spoken or written) which run counter to the war effort. At the outbreak of war in September, 1939, both the British and the German Governments published collections of diplomatic documents relative to the causes of war: a student in search of truth would wish to read and study both, yet it is practically impossible in either country to obtain the book published by the other side. It is indeed notorious that, apart from actual lying, the constant circulation of biased and one-sided information is an inevitable accompaniment of war.

Another evil which we desire to resist is the subordination of all other activities to the military interests of the State. But the nation which engages in defensive war is obliged to embark on a similar policy. Urgent measures of social reform—improved education, the abolition of overcrowding, etc.—have to be deferred. The building of new churches to meet the spiritual needs of the people has to be postponed. The ranks of candidates for the Christian Ministry must be depleted because young men are needed for what is called "national service".

It may be *theoretically* possible for some individuals to engage in warfare without hatred. But it cannot be denied that the existence of a state of war vastly increases for many people the temptation to hate, and some at least of the weaker brethren are unable to resist. The nation which resorts to war therefore incurs the "woe" pronounced by our Lord

on those by whom occasions of stumbling come to His little ones.

When we ask why, in face of these considerations, multitudes of sincere Christian people nevertheless justify the resort to war, we find it is because they believe that there is no other "force" strong enough to destroy the evils which confront us. We are then driven back to the problem: what is the strongest kind of force? The essential basis of the pacifist position is that the force which is finest in quality is also the strongest because it is of the same kind as the almighty power of God. If God Himself is revealed by the Cross, then the Love that suffers is stronger than the force which inflicts suffering, because it has within it the power that can transform the evil-doer. Since costly forgiveness is the supreme manifestation of the power of God, it is also the activity in which man is most God-like. St. Stephen's capacity for forgiveness did not save his life; nor could his fellow-Christians save him by their readiness to forgive their persecutors. But through their forgiveness the grace of God was given a channel through which it could operate; and in answer to their prayers Saul was converted, and thereby many who would have been his victims were preserved.

Niebuhr—perhaps the ablest and most influential of the Christian opponents of pacifism—readily admits the pacifism of Jesus. But he contends that, in this as in other respects, the ethical ideal of our Lord is one which is incapable of realization in a world which is so completely corrupted by sin. We may rightly be thankful for his insistence on the gravity of sin in an age which so often tends to make light of it. We may indeed agree with him that "the New Testament does not . . . envisage a simple triumph of good over evil in history. It sees human history involved in the contradictions of sin to the end".¹ That is true. Yet the New Testament does suggest that there will be "children of light" as well as "children of darkness"; whereas Niebuhr suggests that there can *only* be the latter. He condescendingly reminds pacifists that "a truly Christian pacifism would set each heart under the judgment of God to such a degree that even the Christian idealist would know that knowledge of the will of

¹ Niebuhr: *Why the Christian Church is not Pacifist*, p. 31.

God is no guarantee of his ability or willingness to obey it".¹ This is, of course, true; but Niebuhr seems to have forgotten the grace of God. He could very happily say with St. Paul, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom. vii. 18). But one can find in him no echo of the Apostle's equally characteristic saying, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13). The reason for this is that Niebuhr follows Luther rather than the Catholic tradition in his doctrine of forgiveness (as indeed he himself would admit): he understands and marvels at the fact that Christ can say to the sinner, "Neither do I condemn thee". But he would regard it as a fallacious piece of absolute ethic that the same Christ should go on to say, "Go and sin no more" (John viii. 11).

If then we believe in the grace of God, which is Divine Love in action, and if we believe in the omnipotence of that Love, there can be no question as to its adequacy to meet all the forces of evil that are in the world. To think otherwise would be to accept a dualism which believed in evil powers equal or superior to the power of God. For this reason it is tragic when men and women who profess the Christian Faith tell us that "Christianity is at stake", either in some war or in some other crisis. Christianity is not and never can be at stake, because the power of evil is always inferior to the power of God. Even in the darkest hour of evil's apparent triumph, the loyal disciple knows that Christ reigns, and he can repeat with confidence the affirmation of the apostolic writer, "We see not yet all things subject unto Him, but we see Jesus crowned" (Heb. ii. 8-9). It is true that the final overthrow of evil has yet to be achieved; but the Christian knows that the victory has been won and that love of Christ's quality will conquer.

What then is our alternative to the war-method of meeting the evil "force" which is working such evil alike in the bodies and the souls of men—to the method which even those who feel reluctantly constrained to use it admit to bring in its train such a mass of hideous evil? The alternative is no fresh

¹ Niebuhr: *Why the Christian Church is not Pacifist*, p. 46.

thing: it is the Christian Gospel—which applied afresh to the problems of each age is always good news. We do not attempt to say what should be the attitude of the Government in a State where only some citizens profess to be Christians and many even of them are not following the Christian way. Our first business is to consider the attitude of the Church—what Christians should do *because they are Christians*. If and when the Christians within the State are faithful to our Lord, the situation which confronts the statesmen will be radically different. The Church has to proclaim always the Gospel that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. i. 15). Yet this is the note which is conspicuously absent from the utterances of those Church leaders who support participation in war. Let any one study the pronouncements of non-pacifist English Christians (whether Anglican, Roman Catholic, or Free Church) in 1939-40. He will find an insistence on the evils of the Nazi system and the sins and crimes of Herr Hitler and his confederates: he will find much about our duty to save the victims or potential victims of Nazi sins; he will find even more about the need for crushing or restraining the Nazis. But he will find very little indeed about saving the Nazis from their sins; very rarely indeed will he find these leaders urging their flocks to pray for the conversion of Herr Hitler; most rarely of all will he find them suggesting that the right way (because it is God’s way) of meeting sin is by forgiveness, even unto seventy times seven. The real tragedy is that so many of us have ceased to believe in the Gospel we profess. We believe that God’s grace could convert Saul of Tarsus from “breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord” into the greatest of Christian missionaries; but we apparently do not believe that the same power could convert the fiercest of Christ’s foes to-day, if our prayers—like St. Stephen’s—opened out a channel through which that grace can flow: we seem instead to have endorsed the terrible judgment of Martin Luther when he expressed on one occasion the opinion that “such wonderful times are these that a prince can better merit Heaven with bloodshed than another with prayer”.¹ Hence so-called “Christian England” can spend

¹ Quoted by Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, p. 83.

several millions sterling per day on waging war while it spends under three millions a year on preaching the Gospel to the nations. The Church, in fact, condones the killing of sinners (including many whose sin is small) because it has insufficient faith in the power of Christ to save them. Christian pacifism is not a new fad or a new philosophy; it is merely the application to a particular set of problems of the fundamental evangelical truth that Christ regards sinners as people to be saved, that God's power is adequate to the accomplishment of His Will, and that the mode and quality of that power has been revealed on Calvary. As soon as Christians begin to devote to evangelization the same thought and energy and money and enthusiasm and self-sacrifice which they are now so heroically devoting to the prosecution of war, they will find that there is no need to resort to violence to overcome the "force" of evil men, for the grace of God will have transmuted it to good by the conversion of the sinners.

It is sometimes claimed that this insistence on the necessity of meeting sin by redemptive love is marred by exaggerated individualism. One cannot consider the individual sinners apart from their place in society. This is true; and it has already been pointed out that man can never be a *mere* individual, for personality is essentially social. If man is to achieve the purpose for which he is made, he must take his place in a society which is universal, so that he may see himself and others in their primary status as children of God; and also—for the avoidance of selfishness—that social character must touch the innermost intimacies of his ordinary life. Thus we believe it is God's plan that every human being should belong to two communities of Divine origin—the Holy Catholic Church in which all men are meant to realize as a family their sonship of the One Father, and the family in which we learn the truth that "no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself". If we maintain the family and forget the Church, we develop a society in which God is not central and man finds elsewhere than in Him the centre of his being. If we maintain the Church and forget the family, we get a degraded ecclesiasticism without the true charity—a merely vague idealism. It is in the insistence at one and the same time on the Divine authority of the family

and of the Church that we can see how God intends His children to dwell together in unity.

Within this framework there is and must be a rightful place for multitudes of other social groups—religious, cultural, industrial, political, etc.—each of which can enrich the life of the community. These may be as varied as the Society of Jesus, the University of Oxford, the Marylebone Cricket Club, and the National Union of Railwaymen: but each serves its rightful purpose when seen as a human society which God can bless to the enrichment of mankind in the two Divine societies of the family and the Church. But if Oxford University adopted the principle of free love or the N.U.R. required its members to treat all non-British railwaymen as enemies, they would become incapable of claiming the allegiance of Christians.

It is within this same framework that we must see the rightful place of the State. It is impossible within the compass of this essay to give anything like a full philosophy of the State. In very great measure we can accept the theory expounded by Dr. Temple in his Henry Scott Holland Memorial Lectures on "Christianity and the State". The Archbishop makes clear that he does not regard the State as in any sense supernatural, though he would not hesitate to apply that term to the Church.¹ Nor can we doubt that he would refuse to attribute to the State the same Divine authority as belongs to the family. Actual States are largely the fortuitous result of circumstances, and as such cannot claim an unqualified value. To take an extreme instance, no one could claim that any ultimate principle was at stake in regard to the continuance or otherwise of the existence of San Marino as a separate State: and—whatever views we may hold on political expediency—we could not say that Christian truth requires either that Canada should, or that it should not, remain part of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Nevertheless, the existence of the State in some form seems necessary for the full development of human life: and, while the Christian philosopher is obliged to deny the claims of the omni-competent State, he will no less reaffirm the Pauline dictum that "the powers that be are ordained of God".

¹ Op. cit. p. 41.

There is the further important fact that membership of the State *cannot* be voluntary. To quote Dr. Temple—"If I disagree with my political party I can leave it. If I dislike the rules of my club I can resign my membership. But if I am opposed to the requirements of the State, made in the name of the national community, I can only put myself outside their scope, either by transferring myself to the territory of another State or by forgoing the advantages of civilization altogether. Thus the State has a universal authority over its members such as is not elsewhere to be found".¹ It is from this fact that membership of a State is inescapable, that there springs the right and duty of the State to use force. "The right of the State to employ force is derived from the fact that it alone acts for a community of such a kind that actual membership of it cannot be repudiated".² Yet "the distinguishing mark of the State . . . is not its possession of force, but its self-expression through Law, which employs force as the guarantee of that universality which is its essential nature".³ Pursuing this line of thought the Archbishop, following MacIver, suggests a tentative definition of the State, as "a necessary organ of the national community, maintaining through Law as promulgated by a Government endowed to this end with coercive power the universal external conditions of social order".⁴ Doubtless it was our Lord's recognition of these basic realities of the State, which underlay His injunction to render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. But this must never blind us to the truth that the State is never an end in itself, but an agency to enable men more perfectly to render unto God the things that are God's. "The State exists to liberate the good life by its own characteristic forms of action".⁵ Thus Dr. Temple himself insists that "in the last resort it is more completely the function of the State to serve its citizens than it is their function to serve the State, for they have an eternal destiny and the State has not".⁶

¹ Op. cit. p. 113.

² Id. p. 112.

³ Id. p. 114.

⁴ Op. cit. pp. 123-4.

⁵ F. R. Barry in *Christianity and the Modern State*, p. 163.

⁶ *Christ and the Way to Peace*, p. 17.

Here we reach the heart of the paradox that, while the Christian tradition has unwaveringly upheld the authority of the State as claiming a Divine sanction, it has yet given a foremost place among its saints to the martyrs who have defied the State and died through their disobedience to its laws. Would it not be true to suggest that the point at which the State forfeits its claim on the Christian's obedience is when it requires him to act in a way inconsistent with his loyalty to the two primary Divine societies—the family and the Catholic Church? The Christian pacifist accepts unreservedly the duty of loyalty to the State: but he is obliged to insist also on this limitation, and he is obliged to claim that the State is exceeding its rightful authority when it requires him to treat as an enemy the “brother for whom Christ died” and to abandon the Divine method of overcoming evil with good in favour of the method of retaliation which Christ repudiated. This is no negation of patriotism, but rather a return to its essential basis; for there can be no abiding loyalty to the State save in conformity with the deeper purpose of God which it exists to serve. Only thus can real content be given to the seer's vision of the glory and honour of the nations being brought into the City of God.

CHAPTER V

UNITY: SACRAMENTAL AND FUNDAMENTAL

By the late

NATALIE VICTOR

Author of A Catholic Looks at War, etc.

CHAPTER V

UNITY: SACRAMENTAL AND FUNDAMENTAL

OUR concern is now to prove that *war*—far from being, as many contend, a necessary and inevitable eruption recurring in human history: something inherent in the very nature of man—is in fact wholly contrary to his true being. It destroys an already-existent and fundamental unity, a unity experienced at its *highest* point in sacramental union—at its *widest* in the world-wide fellowship of men of goodwill: at its *deepest* in the fact of a common humanity.

To take these three points in succession:

(1) The strongest bond of union between souls is the bond of the sacramental life, strongest because it occurs at the point of juncture where each life is joined to God. At the Altar, and in the moment of Communion, human life is invaded by the Divine. At that moment the Divine life should not only surge inwards but outwards. There should be a lateral fusion. "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them, that they may be One, even as We are One." Whatever conflicts occur in the world outside, *these*, the members of His Mystical Body, should be knit together in an irrefragable union. All who feed on the Sacred Humanity: German and Pole, Czech and Russian, French and British, should be made one by that act. Yet in actual fact what do we find?

Here is a photograph of a field altar (taken in the last war) at which a priest is saying Mass behind the French lines. A private kneels beside him to serve: the rest stand bareheaded in a semi-circle around. Presently the bell will ring and they will fall on their knees in the rough grass to adore their Saviour and to receive the Bread of Life. But at the same hour, a short distance away behind the enemy lines, some priest in a German Catholic battalion is saying

the same Mass, and feeding a few German lads with the same holy Food. And then—Zero hour, the fixed bayonets, the wild rush forward, the rending of the Body of Christ. “My brethren, these things ought not so to be.”

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Mr. Middleton Murry has said that Christianity will be reborn in that Church which is the first to break with Nationalism, and his words are profoundly true. It is the tragedy of the Church that (after the first few centuries) she allowed Nationalism to invade her deepest consciousness, that the bond of nationalism was allowed to compete with, and finally to overcome, the bond of the Christian faith. In the world as we now see it, Nationalism is everywhere dominant and Christianity powerless against it.

This then is our first contention, that, as Christians, we can no longer tolerate the dominance of Nationalism over our Christian Faith. We who have received Christ are one with our brethren of every nation, “being one Bread with them and one Body, for we are all partakers of that same Bread”.

(2) In the second place we have to realize that a common bond exists between the people of every nation who, though not necessarily united by the Christian Faith, belong to that company of men of goodwill whom Dr. Oldham, in a telling phrase, calls “The universal Community of the loyal”. Now it is a commonplace that we, in our generation, are witnessing a conflict of great significance in which the forces of good and evil are said to be ranged against each other in one titanic struggle. But the fallacy, the almost ludicrous fallacy, is to align that conflict on national lines. So persistently is this done that, as one after another of the Allies has succumbed to the enemy, the line of demarcation between good and evil has been pushed geographically westward until it corresponds with the coasts of Britain! But God, from the height of Heaven, does not see the human family as divided by national boundaries. His alignment is wholly spiritual and has been decided, once for all, by His Son. Those who are on God’s side in any nation—and they are so largely to be found among the common

people because it is hard for those who have riches to enter into the Kingdom of God—are the poor in spirit, the mourners, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. These are to be found in every nation, not in any one exclusively.

We must look then to this great army of the good and peaceable in every land to provide the second bond of union which war should not destroy. War is in fact utterly alien to those who have no ambitions, no greed, no covetousness. They are driven into it by forces they cannot resist, and for purposes they cannot remotely comprehend.

This conception of a spiritual alignment will serve as a salutary warning to ourselves. A warning—because any of us, secure in our pacifist conviction and confident in the righteousness of our cause, may at any moment cross the dividing line. Any hardening of the spirit, any contemptuous estimate of our opponents—"Come not near me, for I am holier than thou"—may find us arraigned alongside the forces of evil: the which, God forbid! It is in fact only in *penitence* (and this is our last contention) that we can be assured of being, at all times, on God's side. He dwells in the high and holy place with him that is of an humble and contrite spirit, and those whose hearts are broken with the world's sin are in every nation his elect. It is among *these* that he will look for the builders of the new Jerusalem, *these* who have nothing to live for but the establishment of His Kingdom.

(3) There remains still a deeper and more fundamental unity—that of our common humanity: and it is upon *this*, beyond all else, that our pacifist faith rests. There are many, however, who deny this basic unity—who have accepted the theory that "man is a fighting animal", and who conclude therefore that a reconciliation of this warring instinct is contrary to nature. If this were true, any attempt at reconciliation would be foredoomed to failure.

But in fact the theory is utterly untenable: it denies at one stroke the Fatherhood of God and its inevitable corollary, the Brotherhood of man. We Anglican Pacifists are convinced (and are prepared to stake all on the conviction) that the human race is one vast family, capable (it is true)

of an inconceivable variety of form, but not destined to achieve fulfilment only through animosity.

To see that this is true, we have only to remember that each individual life possesses this unity in its inception; and achieves it again at the moment of death. It is only in the troubled span of this life that its warring instincts find scope. In a book that has now become classical—*Christianity and the Race Problem*—Dr. J. H. Oldham is at pains to prove that the colour prejudice (that deep-seated and apparently ineradicable phenomenon) is not instinctive but acquired. In support of his theory, he instances the devotion of white children to their brown ayahs, and again, the natural friendliness of the white and black children of America. This friendliness disappears at the age of reason, because an evil tradition is impressed upon the child mind—the age-long tradition of the superiority of the white races over the black; but, until that impress is made, a natural equality exists. One might go farther and say that, *given* the right tradition, the cleavage of colour need never occur.

I have in mind the picture of two children crossing an African compound. One is the child of an English priest—perhaps three or four years of age, fair-haired with sturdy limbs, in short tunic and wide sandals: the other, the little daughter of an African priest, a year younger than himself. She wears a spotted pinafore, but her black feet and arms are bare. One fat hand is clasped confidently in his: their faces are alight with love. Together they present the fairest sight on God's earth—two children in their baptismal innocence as God made them, as He willed them to be.

But it is not only in its inception that humanity is one. After the stormy passage of this life, unity is restored in the moment of death. Another picture will suffice. Here are two aircraft engaged in a last death struggle. After a period of swift manœuvring, of attack and counter-attack—disaster occurs simultaneously to each. The two pilots lose control, and both machines begin their last sickening dive. What happens in the few seconds that remain? *This* first: the Grace of God intervenes. Before the last crash comes there is time for each soul to return to God—time even for one or another to find the God he has never known.

Frederick Myers writes in "The Last Appeal":

O somewhere, somewhere, God unknown
Exist and be!
I am dying! I am all alone,
I must have Thee!

God! God! my sense, my soul, my all
Dies in the cry,
Sawest thou the faint star flame and fall?
Ah! it was I.

The moment of grace passes, the two machines dive hissing into the sea and a few souls stand naked before God. In the moment of death everything adventitious drops from them like a discarded cloak. Their nationality means nothing and less than nothing. It is of no more use to them than the sodden uniforms that still wrap their bodies. Their enmity is over: it is as useless as their unspent ammunition.

In a terrible equality, the equality of direst need, they stand naked before God.

And how do they appear in His eyes? Not as a band of Englishmen on the one hand, of Germans on the other! God does not think in terms of nationality but of humanity. Still less do they appear (as many would have us believe) as a band of Crusaders, on the one hand, fighting with shining sword for God and for the right—and on the other, a pack of evil beasts unfit (as one has recently averred) for Christian burial.

They stand there before God, each to be judged according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not. *These* (on the one hand) will be judged according to the illimitable liberty of their upbringing, their capacity to accept or to reject the humanitarian and the Christian traditions that were always within their reach. *These* (on the other hand) according to the cruel Nazi tyranny that took possession of them, body and soul, from their earliest youth; that, as life advanced, deliberately closed to them every avenue through which a humanizing influence could touch their souls. Each is judged according to his capacity

to respond to the highest that was presented to him—judged most of all by his ability to respond to the last swift movement of grace. The judgment is decided and each passes on to his eternal destiny.

Since in all these souls there was found a capacity to live and to die for something other than himself we must humbly believe that there remained in each some spark of goodness that could yet be fanned into a flame; and that, passing through the cleansing fires of Purgatory, they might yet attain an eternal reconciliation. But that can be left only to the Almighty and All-Merciful Judge.

We are not pacifists because we have isolated a single evil and turned all our energies against it. We are pacifists because we believe in the fundamental unity of the human race. To us, war is a monstrous thing thwarting at every point the Divine purpose for the vast human family that is the object of His love.

To recapitulate :

We have seen, in the first place, that war directly contradicts the union of souls that is achieved at its highest point, when (sacramentally) each soul is made partaker of the Divine Nature. Then, when each soul is united to Christ in an inconceivable intimacy, it is unthinkable that it should be torn from its fellow members united equally to that Sacred Humanity. At that point, if at no other, men of every race should be indissolubly one.

We have seen, in the second place, that war has no place among men of goodwill in every nation. *They* are already *one*, the poor in spirit and the humble. What have they to strive for, whose only desire is to live their own quiet lives—the “common people” of every nation, peasant folk, tillers of the soil, asking only to eat their bread in peace, their womenfolk absorbed in household cares, in love of family? War has no concern for them.

Still less does it concern those who live only for God's Kingdom—pious and God-fearing folk in every land, priests and religious, and those above all whose hearts are broken with the world's sin.

Lastly, we have seen that war destroys the fundamental unity of the human race. As each soul comes forth from the Hands of its Creator it is *one* with every member of the human family. As each soul returns to the God who gave it, it returns again to that primal unity.

The brief passage through time allows indeed for the development of infinite diversity (each individual soul, each nation being capable of a unique perfection) and it does *not* allow for the recurrence in each generation of an outbreak of hatred and cruelty which will destroy the perfection of all.

We, then, believe that this is the task of the Church at all times, but never more insistently than at the present time, to proclaim that war frustrates at every point the Divine purpose, that it is contrary to the very being and nature of man, and that only its final renunciation will enable him to assume his full stature and move forward untrammelled to his glorious destiny.

CHAPTER VI
PRAYER FOR PEACE

By

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CHAPTER VI

PRAYER FOR PEACE

To pray is to energize with God. It is not an expression of the self drawn out from its own limited resources but a renewing of the whole being with and through co-operation with God.

Man prays because God has gone out to him and is upholding him, so that he may turn from self and think and feel and work with the Creative Source that gives him life. Every prayer that is true and neither a selfish expression to justify the self to itself nor a wishful thinking to avoid reality, has something of union with God in it, for it acknowledges the dependence of the creature upon the Creator; it accepts the love of God bestowed upon it. At its lowest it is the cry for mercy. At its highest it is the knowledge of its oneness with the eternal uncreated otherness of God. A story may illustrate the first. Two men are shipwrecked; their boat storm-tossed, without oars, and the last rag of sail blown from the mast. One sailor says to the other: "Jim, we have done all we can do, we had better take to our prayers", and Jim replies: "Bill, has it come to that?" And they in their extremity of human helplessness cry out: "God help us". It was late in the day no doubt; and some would say illogical and even dishonest to turn to God only when no more could humanly be done; yet it is a real prayer, for it is the acknowledgment of the dependence of the creature and of his trust in the love and mercy of the Creator. So the dying thief turned in his last extremity: "Lord remember me", and was gathered into the Heart of the Eternal; and the dependence of the father of the possessed child was accepted in his affirmation: "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief."

Prayer is a very simple business. It is the living expression of my understanding and relationship to God and my fellow-men. It is only men that make it difficult, and only sin and selfishness that make it hard to practise. Prayer is the

active expression of the theological fact of existence; that God is the loving Father, the Creator to Whom all creation owes duty and in Whom all exists. Prayer therefore must embrace the whole life of man; his bodily actions; his thoughts; his emotions; the movements of his will. Without prayer religion, however correct its faith or ritual observance, becomes cold, formal, oppressive, and oppressing, even preventing men finding the spiritual truth which the religion would present and protect. Prayer is the heart-beat of the life of the individual and of the Church. There are many ways and methods of praying and it is not the purpose of this paper to discuss in any detail the techniques, but rather to set out some of the general principles upon which each individual, according to his own way, may be able to build up his own particular prayer for peace.

Peace is a desirable thing; from the lack of it man is plunged into many miseries. We should, however, as Christians seek some deeper ground for our prayer. The absence of peace is sin, a falling short of God's good purpose for mankind. The making of peace is the work of God, the accomplishment of His will in this fallen world.

God is peace. He is not only the God of peace but He Himself is peace itself in the same manner that He is not merely the God of love but He Himself is love. Peace is a positive attribute of being, of the same order as love and truth, for peace is the state of harmonious relationship between the several parts of a living organism, each perfectly fulfilling its contribution to the whole and to each other. Peace, as it belongs to absolute being, is therefore in our relative existence only expressible as a state of becoming, that is being manifested rather than being an accomplished fact at any given moment of expression. Peace, the flow and reflow of harmony in unbroken relationship, is the goal of prayer. The end of all Christian desire is the accomplishment of God's glory in the union of the individual with the Divine and of the world with the will of God. Our Blessed Lord promises to those who are in the way of reconciliation with Him, His own peace: "My peace I give unto you", though with that promise goes the certainty of tribulation in the world. Outside the way of His commandments and His teaching

there can be no fullness of peace but only a blind searching for God, if haply He may be found, or a separation from the things of earth in a barren isolation to secure indifference and to avoid sufferings.

The world thinks of peace not as union with God and harmony of service between men but as being a negative state of life during which the physical hostilities which make up so much of human history are in abeyance. This statement needs a little qualification, for though the totalitarian rulers regard peace as only the preparation period for new wars, the democracies are at last coming to realize that actual hostilities are only the final and most disastrous symptom of rivalries and divisions, of pride and avarice, that are in active operation separating the interests of individuals and communities. There is indeed in moral principle little to distinguish the struggle of primitive "totem" groups with stone and axe and club, and the subtle movements of finance between "bears" and "bulls" upon the stock markets. The medium of warfare may be changed but the reality of greed and violence, the lack of peace, is unaltered. Somebody gains, somebody loses, somebody suffers, the harmony of mutual living and co-operation is shattered or prevented from coming into being and the exponents of the system, totem keepers or financiers, pride themselves upon their public service in preserving or increasing the prestige or wealth of the community.

The Christian when he prays for peace is praying about something very much more fundamental than the cessation of "wars". He is faced to-day with a situation in which war is inevitable because human life is based on avarice and not service; because the natural world is being exploited for profit and not for the needs of consumers. Mankind as a whole has chosen mammon. Against this choice the Christian has to set the prayer that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in Heaven. To do so in all earnestness is to pray for peace, for we set the absolute value of the Divine order (the living Peace of the Eternal relationship within the Mystery of God Himself, extended into the creation that is within His peace—the saints in glory and the angelic host) over against the temporal disunity and un-peace of

earth, wherein His peace is only becoming through the prayer and obedience of His servants. In doing so we give ourselves to be and to make that peace a reality in earth. In penitence we sorrow for the difference between the reality of truth in heaven and the reality of sin in earth, and so complete the foundation of the prayer of sinful man—"Lord have mercy". By positive assertion of the truth of heaven we bind ourselves to the way of sublimation to the becoming of peace in thought and action within the body of distortion in which we are called to live and suffer tribulation.

War and division are not natural to man; they are perversions of his true purpose and end in life, though within certain limits they may be made to serve the needs of justice and human advancement. Supremacy through material force is of the armoury of the prince of the power of this world, and it is therefore for peace that man should pray rather than for victory in conflict. Even the victory over some personal sin might be due, not to a new harmony in which the soul grows nearer to God's purpose for it, but to the dominance of some counteracting desire more powerful than that which has been discarded.

Man's life is a warfare, a warfare not to destroy but to make peace; not to conquer one set of earthly desires by another but to secure the rectification of desire into one whole dependence upon the will of God.

There is no promise in the Gospel of the accomplishment of natural or material peace either in the individual soul or in the social affairs of men. The beatitude is not peace but peacemaking. Peace is the work of God in His creation, and we as His children are to be the makers of peace in ourselves and in our immediate relationships and in the world at large. The history of holy souls should give us pause to think and question if there is any full peace unless it is set in the midst of contradictions and even accompanied by physical pain and suffering. The history of the Church seems to declare that she is least effective in her task of announcing the Gospel and making reconciliation when she has struck a balance with the world and has secured an established and settled position in secular civilization. Spiritual life demands a tension between the absolute values of which peace is one

and the passing circumstances of the "this-worldly" in which those values have to be manifested.

St. Paul's soul was torn with the agony of his personal disunity: "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Yet he could also say: "let no man trouble me for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus". Man would continue to trouble him, he would labour in reconciliation, bear the care of all the Churches, and at the end men would kill him. His peace was the peace of Calvary, the peace of the suffering servant. Our Lord Himself spoke to His disciples of the wars and confusions that would come as being the preparation and setting of renewed powers of redemption. May we not therefore see to-day in the circumstances through which we are passing one of those days of His foretelling, and so a day of hope and opportunity, if we are willing to be converted and co-operate with Him in prayer, sacrifice and service?

There can be no Christian prayer without that preliminary activity of conversion, a turning away from disunity to unity as the aim of life and an acceptance of the Divine aid for its accomplishment.

We are men and women of our age—a period in which Christendom, as a temporal and world-possessing institution, has come not only to its decline but to its fall. We shall pray falsely if our prayer is directed to the preservation of that which must perish before the new order of life can appear, or for the maintenance of the "status quo" because it is that to which we are accustomed. The prayer of Abraham, the father of the faithful, led him to go out "not knowing whither he went" and brought him into the land of promise. So too must our prayer be fearless and directed to seeking the kingdom that must be built, not the preservation of that which is passing away. It would be despair, not faith, to pray for the continuance of the night when we know that day must dawn. It is faith and truth and love to pray for power to endure the night so that we may be ready and able to co-operate in the opportunities of the new day. The crisis of our time is not only one of dissolution but also one of rebuilding, for it has been brought about less through decay of the existing order than by the formation of tremendous

new forces which are imposing upon humanity in every field of life new conceptions of human living and relationship. We dare not say that the new age of possible plenty is not according to the will of God, seeing that it is superseding the era of scarcity which has formed our conceptions of sociological relationships and which war would continue and extend by its waste of life and material. Nor can we maintain that the growing moral sensibility that, in the Lambeth resolutions of 1920, called upon the Church of England to be prepared for a complete change of the existing economic order is not to be brought into practical reality because it may mean the radical alteration of the temporal setting of organized religion. It is not the senile composure of a lingering old age we are to pray for, but the redemption of the new order of human relationships which events are pressing upon us. If we do so we may be able to accept the opportunity of the day of our visitation. This is a two-fold task; the accomplishment of peace in our own souls and the making of peace in the world without. Both are intimately related, for it is the prayer of the just man made perfect that is of power, and it is the witness of the soul made peace that is the effective manifestation of the *becoming* of the kingdom in the temporalities that are passing away.

The order of reformation and conversion must be first the individual and then, through the relationship of converted individuals who live peace, the reformation and conversion of the social order, or at least that part of it which their living is able to affect. The promises of the Gospel are to the little flock, not to the social order as a whole, and the purpose of the Church is to be leaven and salt, not, as it is sometimes stated, the religious expression of the mundane society.

Man starts as an individual, a fallen individual in fear and hostility to his surroundings because of his self-centredness, which will, unless he lose his life to save it, bring him to his own place in the lowest hell of separation from all for which he was created. To save his life he must lose that self-centred determination and attitude, finding life in giving out and taking in, and so growing away from individual separation into the full relationship with others that will form a full and responsible personality. In this growth the

dominant passions, of self-protection, fear, and hate all of which lead to war; the creativeness that feeds self and magnifies desires; the adulation that puts self in the centre of all judgment, each and every one must be reconciled by transferring the centre of regard from self to service through worship and sympathy which is charity to God and man. This work of renewal and transformation is an important part of the life of prayer. Through it the mind must be remade to be the mind of Christ, and the body disciplined to be an instrument to serve and not to resist and hinder through unreformed passions the eternal end of its creation. The growth of prayer is a struggle from which there is no escape wherein there are no short cuts of our making.

Each man or woman must bear his very own cross, the actual practical bit of life which has to be reformed in him and through him.

Our Saviour shatters the wishful idealism of those who seek an end in security by that utterance so often misquoted and so often misunderstood: "I came not to send peace, but a sword". The Spirit of God is in this world a reprover of sin, a light of righteousness from the eternal heaven, a power of judgment issuing from the throne of the Lamb, and each individual is a temple wherein sin is reproved, righteousness declared, and judgment accomplished. The old Adam must die that the new creature in Christ may become alive. Prayer that is without that dying, that change of centres, that mortification of the natural being of man, is crippled of any real attainment. It is a hard struggle, a very sword to the dividing of the self. This negative task of self-stripping, the killing of the old man, must be supported by the acquisition, through correspondence with grace, of positive virtues; love and death must walk hand in hand, death to Adam and life in Christ.

Likewise prayer that does not take into its scope the relationship of the kingdom will fail of any real achievement.

The main work of making dead the worldly attachments in order that the spirit may act freely is an individual operation, varied according to the necessity of each person and the particular environment in and for which the prayer is being

accomplished. But the full relationship of redeemed personality is not only with God in the at-one-ment of personal redemption but also in the company of our fellows, both those who are in the way of the kingdom and those who need to be drawn into it. We have to sanctify ourselves for others. As it is in the Cross that the Saviour draws all men to Himself, accomplishing the fulfilment of the relationship between God and man and breaking down the divisions between man and man, so it is in the Cross that both the re-making of the individual life and the re-shaping of the social organism in which each man participates is carried out.

The power of Christian prayer is its identification with Calvary. The Cross is at once the explanation and the force of the Christian way of life, reconciling in the death of the natural individual all that must be restored and lifting him in true relationship with his fellows into the liberty of free and full personality. It is for this reason that the central act of prayer of the Christian community is the Lord's Service of His Passion and victory over sin and death. It is a Service at one and the same time corporate and personal, corporate in the common form and offering, and personal through the individual and yet united Communion of the participants by which each separately is taken into the Living Lord and formed in Him into one whole. We, as members of that united Body, are the continuance in this period of time of His work of reconciliation.

Political and economic theories of pacifism may give way before changing circumstances. It is comparatively easy to be an idealistic or even rationalist pacifist before the guns begin to fire on the ground that war never pays and may destroy civilization. But, under conditions when reason points to justice and right being on the side of one's own country, then nothing less than a deep religious belief that Satan can never cast out Satan, that wars lead to new wars, and that the way of Christ is to refuse the sword and accept the Cross can be strong enough to preserve intact the conviction that the preservation of peace through the Cross is a victory more decisive than all the material conflicts of this world. We cannot end wars even by not fighting in

them, though, if the whole Church Catholic refused in its members to fight, then Christian internationalism might become a living reality. We cannot dictate the terms of victories, though we can advise clemency in peace terms for we know, even if the world forgets, that war breeds war and that those who take the sword will perish by it. We can, however, give ourselves mind, heart, and will to struggle for righteousness, for the establishment of a true harmony of relationship in every sphere of human activity, whether it be in bad social conditions, inadequate nourishment of some section of the community, or oppression and exploitation of man by man.

This opens the widest field possible for our intercession and a broad area for our charitable activity and brings the insistence on peace, which is true relationship, into a right proportion to the whole of life and devotion.

The soul that would effectively pray for peace and live for peace must in itself be becoming peace. No doubt failure in this, the aim of individual life, is the reason why a certain number of pacifists not only fail to commend the principles which they advocate, but even scandalize the ordinary decent folk who have partially settled their inward confusion of aim and conduct by what to them is a reasonable compromise with the existing situation. The irritable, nervous, and acrimonious pacifists who are more anxious to forward propaganda than live the life of peacemaking can only manifest the confusions and suppressions of their own souls. Equally the frigid correctness of the logical abstainer from all actions, even remedial and protective, in total warfare serves only to emphasize a mistaken synthesis of personality on the basis of law in opposition to the other-worldly and illogical charity of the Gospel. The Law produces the Pharisee, the Gospel the Saint. In the warfare of redemption there are no clear-cut opposites, but always a synthesis of an active and creative reconciliation, wherein the light suffers darkness and is not comprehended (shut in) by it. Love is the fulfilment of law, for it brings right and wrong into a living connexion, so that right may not only judge the wrong but also suffer to redeem it.

This is the very function of all intercessory prayer: the

building together of God's righteousness and the world's sin in one creative unity of self-oblation. Intercession is not only God-conscious but world-conscious and the result is often pain. Pain in itself is not an evil, for it can be a friendly warning of dangers physical and spiritual, and it may be remedial. No one can stand outside the conflict of material warfare, least of all a pacifist by religious conviction, for the suffering of it, the sin of it, has to be continuously held to God in intercession, and the knowledge of it even clouds the quiet of worship and heavenly intercourse. The starry skies that speak to the soul of the wonder of creation and call forth our adoration for the Creator are shot with the flares of man's destructive inventiveness. The peace of the heavens merely accentuates the confusions of men.

It is not many words or fine phrases that give to prayer its reality. It is sufficient for the mind to perceive, the heart to feel, and the will to give itself to love and serve, and so to be at one with the energy of the Divine operation. It is true that this simple realization that God is and that He is working can only be a kind of island in a sea of strife and pain, for the very knowledge of His being shows up with terrible clearness the confusion of evil. The poor in spirit who hold still in faith are refreshed, even in the midst of pain when the clever exponents of method or the searchers after tasty phrases and lovely thoughts will find no peace. The shield of faith will quench the fiery darts of temptation, depression, and despair. The cry of dereliction is the affirmation of faith, and we in the midst of war may echo the prayer of the Saint: "O my God if men did but know Thee all the world would be set right". Man does not know. In his self-sufficiency he rides out conquering and to conquer, and brings in his train war, famine, pestilence, and death. The world is the inheritance of the meek and the grave of the proud. Our meekness will be the mark of the reality of our penitence for things being as they are.

There can be no superiority or egoistic rectitude in prayer or action if we are true to the realization of full personal relationship. The enemy is my brother and he needs my prayer because our union is broken. I pray for him because he is my enemy, not because he may hurt me and my prayer

may hinder his action. "He and my fellow-Christian strong in his determination to resist force may despise me, and perhaps rightly, for no doubt I am a poor creature, but it is not for me to add wrath to wrath and so increase evil. To bow before the storm is to deprive it of that which it might find in me to feed upon and so increase its malignancy. To be meek does not imply being inactive, for wherever there is service, good to be done, suffering to be alleviated, there we may and should emulate and rival all the strenuous virtues of our belligerent compatriots. Added to which there is the task of continuous intercession which may be for some a complete activity, immobilizing them from the more active participation in the outward works of material charity.

Peace alone is inexhaustible, for it is of God. Division, hate, anger, strife, the whole legion of sin, are a misuse of creation and can only continue by what they feed upon in creation through the opposition they create. If they find no new conquests to feed their egotism they must inevitably exhaust their own finite energy and, through their own violence, fail. In the long run the problems of wars and the evils that lead up to their occurrence are spiritual ones. The evil forces of division can only be successfully restrained by beating themselves out against the meekness of recollected souls, and they will only be overcome by a hunger and thirst for righteousness that will take no rest, nor give God any rest, till He re-establishes order in the earth. The strength of intercessory prayer is not only its desire for the accomplishment of the will of God, its endurance of the opposite, but also its sympathy for the objects of its prayer. This sympathy is an expression of the beatitude of mercy and is a reconstruction of the broken order of human life. The merciful shall obtain mercy because, on their side at least, they are re-establishing a relationship and so becoming part of the unbreakable eternal order. The world may doubt the power of prayer and may only think of mercy in terms of action, but the Saints know better. "There is a remedy for sin," writes St. Catherine of Siena in the Dialogues, expressing God's message to her and through her to the Church, "by my servants. Therefore I give my servants hunger and desire for my honour and the salvation of souls." The

passage proceeds to call upon the servant to "take thy tears and thy sweat drawn from the fountain of my Divine Love and with them wash the face of my Spouse (the Church). I promise thee by this means her beauty may be restored to her . . . peaceably, by humble and continued prayer". It is not to be accomplished by material means, by argument or even prophetic violence, though these may have their part in the working out of the situation, but the first means is "humble and continued prayer". To the praying soul the promise of mercy is likewise given: "I will protect thee and my Providence shall never fail thee in the slightest need".¹

Sickness and suffering are obvious causes for sympathy. Mercy must, however, embrace the whole family of man, even to the airman who bombs our towns by night or machine-guns women and children by day. If we try fairly, without any personal feeling caused by fear or anger, to put ourselves alongside him and try to feel as he must feel we shall discover that he is indeed in need of the prayer of our sympathy and mercy if any man is. "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Men do not know the many evils that they accomplish because their eyes are blinded by their many desires, their occupation with the transitory things of earth, with the selfish—even though harmless—use of possessions, with the misuse of God's natural gifts, stolen from the Creator's common purpose of common use, mutual enjoyment, and distribution, and so they fail to discern God in His creation. It is only the detached soul that may see God. From lack of that vision of God, men become enslaved in their own lusts and quarrel over the division of His bounty, exploiting and destroying each other for individual, social, and national advantage. The realization of God would be incomplete if it did not lead to the realization of His creation and its unity. The soul that follows the long ascent of the spiritual path that leads through the purification of feeling to the great loneliness wherein the flame of life burns clear, attached to nothing, fed only by the source from which it springs, must turn back in renewed creative power to gather the surrounding darkness, all the darker because of its own

¹ *The Dialogue of St. Catherine of Siena* translated by Algar Thorold, p. 72.

vision, into the Light which it perceives. Spiritual perception will be unreal and delusive if it does not lead to that activity of reconciliation and peacemaking which is the hallmark of the union with God.

If the result of the soul's activity should be that of the second beatitude of immediate promise it may be comforted, but only if in persecution, whether within by spiritual suffering or without in worldly affairs, it is occupied in peacemaking. To be persecuted because we are noisy, troublesome folk is of no merit to ourselves or to the world, but to be persecuted for righteousness' sake because, in ourselves and our way of life and conduct, in our praying and thinking, we are exponents and participants of that harmonious relationship which is peace and peacemaking, will be to us an assurance of inward peace and to the world a converting power and witness of truth. To be tortured in mind and spirit by a whirlwind of painful distractions, the result of our own unease and lack of mortification, may, if we are faithful, tend to our own amendment and penitence, but to endure the torment of temptation, malignancy, and contradiction, with the whole will set on God to bear whatever He allows, may bring the knowledge that He has let us bear some little of the cost of His peacemaking.

In conclusion, if we are to answer the call to witness and make peace to-day it can only be effective if our lives are founded in earnest and prolonged prayer. Fruitful action follows prayer and character is determined by prayer. The hurried modern life makes this difficult with the result that thought is ill determined, action is weak, and character vacillating. A social life such as ours which is expressed in terms of money is in itself hostile to the need of prayer, for it can perceive no immediate gain from its prosecution nor can it be tabulated in the form of concrete results in parochial or diocesan records. Lip service is indeed paid to the principle by elaborate organization of days of prayer, quiet afternoons—often most unquiet—and special services, but take it all the way round, little time is spent in teaching or helping people to pray, and little encouragement is given officially for prolonged prayer either for priest or people.

A first step towards the recovery of the place of prayer in

the corporate life of the Church and community might be secured through the formation of small groups of people, who would learn to become common-minded and would think together, pray together, and perhaps even work together, wherever their prayers showed them some particular application in the material sphere.

In the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, scattered through the community, there is the nucleus of such grouping. Such groups ought never to be of any considerable size, probably never more than five or six people, who can easily meet frequently and learn through mutual co-operation to know each other. Groups should be ready to subdivide as soon as numbers grow and could be related to each other by some of the members of each group as they divide still remaining part of the parent group, so that the experience of the older group may be mediated to help those more recently formed.

The peoples of the world hunger for peace, and the people of this land, as shown by their history between the wars, possess the ideal of peace. An end-of-the-age period of history is not by its nature a time of peace, for it must be an age of struggle between old and new ideals and ideologies, both economic and social, which may easily at any time find their conclusion in active hostilities trying to secure the victory by the knock-out blow of material violence. Only a supreme spiritual effort can form the counterpoise to this natural struggle. The Church is faced with special difficulties, for the new age is in its inception secular and irreligious because its conception of things as they are regards religion as belonging to the past order and conceives of the Church as being occupied with the preservation of the "status quo", its privileges, and its endowments.

It must therefore be our task with others to convince the modern world that this is not so and to prepare the Church from within for the inevitable witness of her passion. There can be no redemption without suffering, self-sacrifice and humble service, and if the Church is to reconcile the new order of things to God and draw man back into her fold she must be prepared to fulfil a very passion of prayer and self-sacrificing service to humanity.

It is in that day, not in the day of her power, her privilege, her vested interests rooted in the feudal past, that she may be able to learn, what we believe is Gospel truth, that the victory of God is not attainable by earthly weapons and that the Cross is stronger than the sword. It is for us now to pray earnestly that we may be strengthened for that task of witness and conversion and be equally determined so to order our individual lives that we fall not short of what God can do with us in the way of holiness.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHURCH'S DUTY AND OPPORTUNITY

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CHAPTER VII

THE CHURCH'S DUTY AND OPPORTUNITY

AGAINST what background are we to measure the duty and the opportunity of the Christian to-day? The first duty of a Christian in the world to-day is to try to think the reality. As a Christian he should be more capable of thinking the reality than other men, for he is committed to the belief that the truth is a painful thing. The way of the mind in search of truth is the way of the Cross.

The basis of any adequate thinking of the crisis of civilization in which we are involved is the realization that the machine-technique has now practically completed its conquest of the entire world. The war now being waged is an enormous civil war in the inmost fabric of this "machine-civilization". This civil war may fairly be regarded as inevitable, in that the machine technique has perforce been merely superimposed on the political, social, and religious structure evolved in a pre-machine age; that is to say, there has been a vast increase of physical power without any considered change of political, social, and religious structure. The powers of the national societies have become titanic; but the organization to control them has remained rudimentary. Therefore, the powers become devastating—and this devastation is manifest not only in open warfare, but in the devastation of the natural resources of human life. The denudation of vast tracts of the once fertile earth, the sheer despoliation of the sea, the fearful squalor of industrial cities, the incessant creation of undeveloped slaves of the machine—this continuous devastation of nature and of man is an integral part of the machine-devastation now manifest in open war. That is to say, the devastation is the common tragedy of mankind, politically, morally, religiously, unprepared for the advent of the machine age.

A second basic realization is that Britons are peculiarly unfitted, by the accident of their history, to realize that this

is the true situation. For, although it was necessary that even they should not have been spared internal devastation by the machine, their national devastation occurred a long while ago, at the beginning of the industrial age, when the energy liberated by their sense of being pioneers and the wealth created by their new industry, enabled them to bear the shock and scar the wounds. The marks of the chaos and squalor of the period 1780-1840 are still visible enough in Britain; and some of us would say that the wounds to the national psyche are still aching: nevertheless, it was the prelude to a period of unprecedented prosperity and power, which has helped us to become oblivious to what we suffered. A kind of practical and almost "natural" compromise between the national structure and the machine-economy was achieved in Britain, so that we were able to regard the first achievement of the machine age as a triumph of "peaceful progress"; but this has now become positively inimical to our understanding of the true situation. We are horrified by the new political and social and religious structures which less privileged nations have been compelled to improvise to control the anarchy which we took in our stride; we regard them as traitors to the common cause (which we identify with our own peaceful anarchy); and we look upon the uncongenial political and social expedients to which we ourselves are compelled to resort in defence against them as their doing, not ours. And certainly it is true that it is not our doing; but neither is it theirs. But the solution of our dilemma, the explanation of our bewilderment, which is that we and our present enemies are alike victims of an ecumenical necessity, is excessively difficult for us to reach. Yet this solution is urgently required; because it is only through the common acknowledgment of a common necessity that the nations can speak a common language.

This necessity of speaking a common language is widely felt to-day; it is the main source of the renascence of a wistful Christian aspiration. Can we not speak again the common language of Christendom, as we were wont to do? We deeply sympathise with that aspiration; indeed its fulfilment seems to us the one final hope. But the dangers of illusion are very great. Unless that Christian aspiration is linked

with a common acknowledgment of the nature of the universal predicament, we shall end—indeed, many have begun—by assuming that the Christian language is spoken only by our own side in the monstrous civil war. To be more explicit, the price we have to pay for the beginnings of a new community of Christian thought, is to recognize that the Germans, as much as we, are victims of the ecumenical necessity. They have been compelled to struggle to control anarchy; that their struggle is more desperate and more brutal than ours is mainly due to the fact that the necessity as it befell them was more naked. To suppose that they have repudiated Christianity, while we have not, is a delusion. The only valid distinction, at this level, is that the German repudiation of Christianity has been more conscious and deliberate than our own.

The cause of our subtle and instinctive equivocation in this matter is really simple. It is primarily due to the habitual association of trade and peace which was characteristic of nineteenth-century England. Taking it farther back in history, it is due to the individualistic emphasis of Protestant Christianity from which the dynamic for our industrial progress derived. As that was, at best, a very partial interpretation of Christianity, so the peace of trade was hardly a Christian peace at all: it was much rather war in the paraphernalia of peace. One may recall, for example, the outburst of moral indignation which was caused by the German efforts to redress the balance of our "peaceful" trade: German "dumping" was represented and felt to be a sin. Yet to-day the subsidizing of exports is accepted as part of the normal machinery of British trade.

If we try, as we surely must, to come clean of this traditional association between trade and Christian peace, and try to set down honestly the points in which we may claim to be more Christian than Germany, we may set down first the fact that the Christian Church is more independent in Britain than in Germany. In Germany there is no room allowed for a Church which claims to criticize the State. In Britain, the Church may claim the right to criticize the State; but in practice it does not exercise it. The difference is not in fact so great as it appears, in this regard. The more

solid difference is in the realm of political freedom. In Britain the individual is still recognized to have rights as against the State; in Germany he possesses none: but here again there is no denying that the traditional British rights are menaced, directly and indirectly. Individuals can be and are now imprisoned without the State being required to show cause before an independent tribunal; the right of the individual to criticize the State has been seriously diminished because it is now an offence "to create alarm and despondency". And many sensitive minds (which make no claim to be pacifist) feel that a point may be approaching at which the fundamental liberties for which we claim to be fighting may be so diminished that we shall be left with no concrete cause at all.

This paradoxical situation is set down as due to the exigencies of war. But that is no real explanation. We need an explanation why the exigencies of war become total war—in which the whole energies of a nation are deliberately mobilized to the single end of military victory? The answer is that total war is the form war must take in the phase of "civilization" when a universal system of machine-production is superimposed upon an obsolete political system of sovereign nations. In such a situation nations which are determined to retain their sovereignty cannot afford to be less than self-sufficient; they must control all the resources necessary to their complete military efficiency. These include sovereign control over the actions of their citizens. Nothing can be omitted that is necessary to optimum functioning of the nation organized for war, and nothing permitted that will detract from that functional perfection.

There are two, and only two, alternatives before mankind in such a phase of "civilization": total peace, or total war. While war remains a possibility, nations will prepare for it. And the possibilities and the demands of functional organization are such that no margin of freedom can be permitted within a society at war, or preparing for war. If total peace cannot be established, then there is no end to the process of total war, until a single universal empire has been established. There may be interludes, which must be in the nature of an uneasy armistice, during which the new self-sufficient empires

prepare themselves for total war on a more colossal scale. There may even be a temporary "balance of power" between the self-sufficient empires. But that will make no real difference to the nature of the process. Preparation for total war is indistinguishable from total war in its effect upon society. Germany from 1932 to 1939 was a nation at war.

In that perspective, the idea of fighting to preserve liberties by means of total war reveals its contradiction. These liberties are incompatible with the process which manifests itself as total war. Nor can victory in total war re-establish those liberties; because there is only one conclusive victory in total war—namely, the final victory which establishes world-empire. All that comes before it is merely a prelude to the next stage in the war for universal empire; and preparation for war on this scale is indistinguishable in its social consequences from war itself.

The present superiority in initiative of Germany over ourselves in the war derives from the fact that Herr Hitler has clearly seen and accepted one of the alternatives; he has deliberately decided for total war pushed to its logical conclusion—universal empire. And, we repeat, that is the logical conclusion of a universal machine economy superimposed upon a social and political organization into sovereign nations. The alternative solution, which it lay in the power of the victorious democracies to initiate in 1918, was not clearly seen; neither was the nature of the choice acknowledged—we relapsed to the old and obsolete idea of "peaceful trade", or the tradesman's peace: war in the disguise of peace. The consequence of our failure to lay the foundations of a world-community of nations has been that the war of nations has been carried into a new phase: it is now a war not of nations but of empires. Germany has created a new European empire in the process; Japan a new empire in the East. The new Russian Empire has been created, too. There is the American empire. The British empire is the most vulnerable of all.

It is not possible seriously to speak of Christianity as being directly involved in this constellation of empires. The whole process is manifestly sub-Christian. And if the presence of Christianity on one side or the other is determined realistically,

we must recognize that the solid substance of the Roman Catholic Church in Europe, in Italy and Germany and Spain and France is probably either allied to, or sympathetic with, or has submitted to, the power of Germany. If the present contest is to be represented as one between Christian and anti-Christian powers, it follows that the Roman Catholic Church is on the side of the anti-Christian ones. Which is absurd. The real issue is not one of Christianity at all, but of the relative power of these imperial aggregations created by the need of self-sufficiency in a machine-age. And the crucial question is whether there can be any real pause in the process of struggle for universal empire: whether there is any possibility of establishing peaceful relations between these imperial aggregates. Peaceful relations, unless they are based on an abolition of war, are illusory.

To sum up, total war is a new kind of war. It is the product not of the natural man's invincible tendency to sin, but of the terrible contradiction between his material dependence upon his fellows and a political and social organization, domestic and international, which belies that mutual dependence, because it was not created to express it. This contradiction arises from the nature of the now universal machine-civilization.

Men have not acquired the habit of mutual responsibility which the machine-civilization demands. It is not surprising that they have failed. This colossal revolution in the ways of human life—by far the greatest revolution in the recorded history of man—has happened within a hundred years. In the twentieth century the tempo of change and the urgency of its demand have become truly prodigious. Feeling rather than understanding the necessity of a complete change in his habitual attitudes towards his fellowmen, man has reacted back to more primitive patterns of behaviour. He has felt in his psyche the fear of an impending advance into the unknown: an unknown world of new human relations—relations of a kind which Christ once taught as necessary to the life that is life indeed—and he has fallen back for refuge to the security of the familiar and exclusive group: the nation. Hence, at the moment when the demand for universal brotherhood is absolutely imperative, there is instead

an explosion of a new fanatical nationalism: nationalism of an intensity that is directly anti-Christian.

This manifest frenzy of nationalist and total war, if it continues to rage, can be brought to rest only in the establishment by ever-increasing violence of a universal empire, and a complete devastation of humanity in the process. For this new kind of war, based on new modes of production and new forms of economic organization, can and will absorb the entire energies of the nations. They will live, in so far as they live at all, only to make war, or to defend themselves against it, which is the same thing. The very idea of a free society will perish from the earth, unless war is abolished: or it will be painfully revived only amid the universal shambles upon which a universal empire will be established.

Peace, therefore—peace that is at least deliberately conceived as the prelude to ecumenical peace—is a necessity if human freedom is to be more substantial than a memory. Peace is no longer the dream of the idealist, but the very condition of the continuance of all that we are accustomed to regard as human existence; for the mode of existence into which we shall be compelled, if war is not abolished, is definitely sub-human: more bestial than any mode of existences which mankind has ever endured.

If the foregoing argument is valid, the very existence of any kind of "free society" now depends upon the total abolition of war. Since, obviously, the independent existence of the Christian Church depends upon the existence of a free society, it follows that the Christian Church should be committed to the abolition of war as the condition of its own independent existence. If war is not abolished, the institutional Church cannot avoid a position of total subordination to the secular State. Many would say that it is already in that position; and it is surely true that it is near to it. So that we may say that the abolition of war is now become the essential condition of the liberation of the Church.

This situation creates a revolutionary change in the significance and perhaps in the nature of Christian pacifism. From a subordinate and eccentric position in the teaching of the Christian Church it becomes central. Or so it should

become. Pacifism is demanded now, not merely by the teaching of Christ, but by the nature of things. "The very stones cry out." And however much the Christian pacifist may believe that his faith is based upon the teaching of Christ, he cannot well deny that it is tremendously reinforced by the new necessities of the natural order. For hitherto the weakness of the Christian pacifist position has been that it has appeared to single out a single strand in the teaching of Christ, while relatively neglecting the others. Why, it has been asked over and over again, do Christian pacifists not also profess an evangelical poverty? The answer is really simple: that war, of all the great human occupations, is most evidently contrary to the mind of Christ. If war could be abolished, the rest would follow. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven, and all the rest shall be added unto you." The simple intuition which sees in the Christian renunciation of war the necessary beginning of the seeking of the Kingdom is confirmed by the march of history.

Ultimately, the effect of this change upon the Church must be revolutionary. Hitherto, the recognition of pacifism within the historic Church has been confined to the canon law whereby those in holy orders are forbidden to bear arms. This formal and symbolical recognition of the pacifism of the Christian gospel is now required to become actual. All men are required to become, in this cardinal matter, as ministers of Christ. From the point of view of the sociologist, this is a further stage in the deprofessionalization of the Christian ministry: more important even than the great previous one, whereby the celibacy of the priesthood was abandoned. But from a slightly different point of view it is the culmination of a long process of change in the relation of the Church to society. This process of change has gradually moved from a recognized spiritual superiority of the Church over secular society, through a condition of spiritual equality between them, and now threatens to become one in which the secular society is spiritually superior to the Church. A sign of this change is the relative predominance of non-Christian elements in the actual pacifist movement to-day; yet another is the definite lead taken by the Christian laity within the Church itself.

The only way in which the institutional Church can recover its position of spiritual authority is by making its own the demand for the abolition of war which springs from the necessities of the secular society. Yet this is very difficult for those forms of the institutional Church which are intimately wedded to the national State. Moreover, as the exigencies of total war increase, and the war-organization of society becomes more pervasive, the more marked is the tendency to represent the war as a Christian crusade. This tendency is—at the natural level—psychologically inevitable. The Church has less and less margin for independent existence and free judgment. If it did not discover that the war was a Christian crusade, it would expose itself to an intolerable inward conflict. Thus the same situation which imposes the necessity of peace as the condition of any sort of free society compels the Church into the persuasion that the prosecution of war to a complete military victory is a Christian end.

And, of course, as one might expect from the known subtlety of Satan, the contention is more plausible than ever before. Nazism is, on the face of it, a less Christian organization of society than our own. It exterminated the Jew because of his "blood". It does not permit the Christian to "prophesy" against the State. The Christian may be as religious as he pleases under Herr Hitler, so long as his religion does not issue in public criticism of the State. Since this is, manifestly, a vital function of the Christian Church—unless it is to retreat into pure otherworldliness—it is true enough to say that Nazism is anti-Christian. But, unfortunately, that does not make ours a Christian society. The Church in England may still possess the theoretical liberty of prophesying against the State. But if, in practice, it refrains from using it, what then? Either there is nothing in the State to be criticized by the Church: in which case the Church does maintain that this is a Christian society. Or the Church is afraid to criticize the State, in which case its position is really the same as that of the Church in Germany. We have already considered the claim that ours is a Christian society, and found it untenable.

Here then is the tragedy of the Christian Church. It is

incapable of making the basic Christian criticism of the modern State: namely, that its *raison d'être* is war. Instead of criticizing the whole structure of modern industrial and nationalist society, it criticizes the structure of the enemy society. Yet much the same structure has been adopted by countries which appear to have as good a title to call themselves Christian as our own—Italy and Spain. And so, not merely the Church in Britain, but the Church everywhere is paralysed. It dare not fulfil its function as the universal Church, which is to make a universal criticism of the universal modern society whose final end is war. By doing that, it would become a persecuted Church; by refusing to do it, it becomes an unreal Church. Either it betrays its own universality by virtually identifying itself with the national State; or it takes refuge in a profession of otherworldliness which is belied by its own implication in society.

It is easier to diagnose the disease than to discover the remedy. Indeed, I do not believe that there is any simple remedy. The more clearly one sees that it is the opportunity and the duty of the Church to-day to bring peace to the world, if only because without peace the Church must be forced into ever more complete subordination to the total organization of the State for war, the more clearly one sees that the Church is at present incapable of doing its duty or taking its opportunity. It is so deeply entangled in the structure of society which makes for war that it cannot break free without tearing the institutional Church into pieces. Without a degree of Christian heroism which it would be foolish to expect, seeing how plausible are the excuses for not manifesting it, the Church is condemned to wait upon the achievement of international peace by the secular society. That peace may be imposed by conquest, or by mutual exhaustion, or by fear of revolution, or it may conceivably come through the genuine realization that peace is necessary to the salvation of any tolerable human society.

Nevertheless, I am conscious that I have presented the situation as one of hard and fast alternatives. At any other time I would have been eager to admit that hard and fast

alternatives are not in the British tradition: in England both Church and State have a native genius for the middle way. But now the process of social change is so rapid that there may be no time to discover the middle way. On the other hand, a situation may arise in which the institutional Christian Church will take its courage in both hands and suddenly advance clean beyond the statesmen in an appeal for peace. It is not impossible that the Christian Church may be so moved by the coming misery of Europe that it will be suddenly re-inspired by the sense of its own universality.

All these things are possible. And if peace were to come by the instrumentality of the Christian Church, it would be an omen of great good for the future. But, even in the best case, we must remember that cessation of war will be only the beginning of travail. In order to save themselves from anarchy, the societies will be compelled towards an intensification, rather than a relaxation of their totalitarian tendencies for a very considerable time. The pressure of that compulsion will decrease but slowly. The question is whether the institutional Church will be capable of taking the lead in the re-humanization of society. There is no doubt, in my own mind, that it *could* be the most potent of all instruments of this regeneration. Whether it will be is much more doubtful. But, obviously, its position would be one of much greater authority if it had, in fact, finally taken the initiative towards a cessation of the war.

My present faith, I confess, is much rather in the eventual revivification both of totalitarian society and the Christian Church, at any rate in Britain—by new forms of community created in response to the new stresses of the secular society. Naturally, I think first of the forms of community that are now springing up among pacifists. Those forms are various: they include the withdrawn community working upon the land, the income-sharing community of the more fortunate persons who are allowed to pursue their familiar occupations, and the occasional community of those who are drawn together in groups to escape their own isolation and to confirm one another in their pacifist faith. Some of these are specifically Christian communities; the majority are not. But I have not much doubt that these last will be finally

drawn towards an awareness of their unconscious Christian basis, although the Christian profession they will arrive at, and the Christian communion they will value, will be more comprehensive than that of any existing Christian Church.

The question is how far this renaissance of the fundamental Christian experience of community will tend to the re-edification of the historic Church. In the long run I believe it is bound to do so. I believe the movement towards schism is over. Just as certainly as the political and economic tendency of the world is no longer centrifugal, so will the religious movement be. But the speed with which the reunification of the Christian Church is accomplished depends upon many incalculable factors. Upon one we have already insisted. If the initiative towards peace comes visibly from the universal Christian Church, as it may, not only will the pacifist communities be irresistibly drawn towards the Church, but her power of attraction for millions of others will be vastly increased. For every single pacifist professed there are a thousand who long in their hearts for peace; only they do not see the way. If the Church utters the unspoken aspiration of their hearts, she will regain much of her old authority. Once she becomes, in the eyes of the common man, the guardian of peace, she will regain his allegiance.

But of the Church in Britain we have a more particular expectation: for it belongs to the uniqueness of this country that its political development has been intimately bound up with the Christian religion. Even the most disappointed among us will not deny that Christian inspiration has been a potent influence in English politics. Gradually the Church in England as a whole has come to regard it as its Christian duty to defend liberty of conscience. To-day, the responsible leaders of the Church are unanimous in seeking to defend the pacifist against victimisation and persecution. This is a remarkable change since the last war and one whose significance must not be underestimated: for in no other great European country has the Church moved in this direction. The significance of this movement appears the greater when we consider that the social and political tendency during the same period has been towards a vast increase in the comprehensiveness of the authority of the State.

This tendency is now developing at the galloping tempo induced by total war; and it is safe to prophesy that, no matter what the political façade may be, in Britain as in every European society, the authority of the State is bound to become more comprehensive every day, whether for the further prosecution of the war or the repair of its ravages. The possibilities of free and autonomous activity outside the control and direction of the State will be reduced to a minimum. It is still very hard for Britons to conceive that the present diminution of their freedom of expression and association is not accidental and temporary; nevertheless it seems certain that, unless the consciousness and the purposes of men undergo a radical change, the difficult and unprecedented task of planning a planned society for the maximum of freedom will not be undertaken in time at the level where it could be most effective. The ruling minority—and we must accustom our minds to the likelihood that a minority will rule—will probably rule in the interests of a class and not of the whole. At this moment it is uncertain whether it will be the possessing or the working-class that will control the new totalitarian State in Britain; and one must admit that in Britain it is still at least theoretically possible that the ruling minority may rule in the interests of society as a whole, as it honestly conceives those interests. That is the best we can hope for: we may call it a kind of democratic totalitarianism.

Under any such system the responsibility that will fall on voluntary associations will be as tremendous as the difficulties in the way of their fulfilling them: for without the permission of the State they will find it almost impossible to function. What we should aim at and be even now working for is to build up voluntary associations for the purpose of spiritualizing the society that is hardening around us every day; and we should be building them up with a clear foreknowledge of what they *may* be required to endure. The worst may not happen: it may be that the ruling minority in the planned society will be sufficiently loyal to the national tradition to be permissive or even benevolent towards voluntary associations. But it would be unduly optimistic to count on this. So far the pattern of our society has not undergone any catastrophic shock comparable to that caused by inflation on the Continent;

but it may well have to endure it. In such a condition of collective insecurity things may happen which the Briton dreams not of. The more the voluntary associations are prepared to make great sacrifices in order that the bond of fellowship may be maintained between person and person, the less will be the chance of their flinching under the coming strain. On them falls the duty of keeping the nucleus of a human society alive—the leaven that will one day leaven the lump.

Of such voluntary associations the Christian Church is the historic archetype. And in this perspective the advance of the Church in England towards the position of defending liberty of conscience takes on its full significance. It gives us reason not to despair that the Church may rise to the height of the coming demand, and fulfil its mission to strengthen and inspire the voluntary associations of the future. In order to fulfil this mission, it is true, the Church will have to undergo a radical change; she too will be required to make great sacrifices, and membership of the Church will need to become infinitely more of a real brotherhood than it has been for centuries. These changes may happen; we have no reason to despair of their happening. At any rate we have some cause to believe that, if they happen anywhere, it will be in Britain.

But the danger to which the Church may succumb is to think primarily of saving its own life. It will not be difficult for the Church to make a bargain with the totalitarian State, as it has done already in Italy and Spain, on the basis that the Church concerns itself with the religious cultus only and withdraws all claim to concern itself with the organisation of society for Christian ends. I believe that if the Church succumbs to this temptation its future will be "Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse". But, if the Church is capable of the humility necessary to discern that it is called to be the champion of many other forms of voluntary association in the sure faith that where true brotherhood is, there is Christ, then, not only will it have an irresistible power of attraction for those new forms of brotherhood, but through them it will acquire an entirely new power of evangelizing society.

At the moment that I write these words, comes the news that the Archbishop of Canterbury has led the delegation which has protested to the Chancellor of the Exchequer

against the inclusion of books within the scope of the new purchase-tax. That is an encouraging example of the recognition of the extended spiritual function of the Christian Church in the period of transition towards the new centrally controlled society. It may appear that it is a far cry from this to pacifism. But pacifism is only the inmost citadel of which freedom of expression is the outworks; or, to speak in terms of community, the responsive readers of a book, which is (as Milton said) the life's blood of the author, become members of a spiritual brotherhood. And the name of Milton reminds us that his magnificent plea for "the liberty of unlicensed printing" sprang from the same great movement of spiritual liberation as George Fox and the Quakers. It was against the censorship of the then Archbishop of Canterbury that Milton so gloriously thundered. If, as is not impossible, the Archbishop of Canterbury to-day becomes the champion of freedom of expression against the encroachments of the omnivorous State, we may be well content. The institutional Church in England will have done at least one of the great things that we have the right to expect from her. The liberty of prophesying to-day has passed beyond the familiar ambit of Christianity. If the head of the *Ecclesia Anglicana* can already discern that his duty is towards the many "who are within though they seem without"; that he is the defender not merely of the Christian conscience but of the conscience that is not Christian; that he is the guardian of spiritual freedom as such, whether or not it confesses a religious allegiance—those who believe in the Christian mission of this country may take heart. They will have some warrant for their faith that England may yet show the world the way towards a Christian peace.

I think there can be little doubt that the next phase in large-scale development is a centrally planned and controlled society. Some form of what is generally, and rather vaguely, described as "totalitarianism" is, so far as I can see, inevitable in the near future. And it seems to me that we Christian pacifists have not given enough thought to this development.

Not that it is at all easy to think oneself into this coming society; and assuredly, in the increasing stress of total war,

it is extraordinarily difficult to set in motion any concrete effort for correcting its potentialities for evil. At present, perhaps, the best we can do is to try to awaken men's minds to the difficulties and dangers ahead; and to accustom them, if we can, to dissociate what is of positive and enduring value in the British idea (or habit) of freedom from what is now socially destructive in it. The good and evil in our tradition of liberty are intimately mixed; and undoubtedly, to a majority of Britons, freedom still connotes, among other things, freedom to seek the maximum of profit in a competitive society.

That simply cannot continue. It will be stopped somehow: whether by forcible prohibition or voluntary surrender. It will be stopped no matter whether the "peace" leaves the nations preparing for yet vaster wars, or whether the elementary foundations of a more enduring peace are laid. But the historical choice between these two conditions will determine whether the planned society, which seems in either case to be unavoidable, will develop towards a more human and Christian structure, or become a monstrous prison-house for the human spirit. The simple fact to be grasped is that, if the activities of society are directed towards preparing for a new phase of total war, the crucial problem of industrial production is solved—diabolically. The accumulation of unmarketable commodities, which causes the breakdown of capitalist economy in time of peace, is automatically dispersed by production for war. The necessity to which the capitalist industrial economy cannot submit without undergoing a revolutionary transformation—the necessity of giving its surplus commodities away—is overcome by a simple and horrible expedient. The State purchases them and stores them up to give away to the enemy. We are, at the moment of writing, giving goods and services away to Germany and Italy at the rate of $9\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds a day, or roughly £3,500,000,000 a year; and we may presume that their generosity to us is on the same lavish scale.

There is—at the purely economic level—no reason why this diabolical war-socialism should not continue. Certainly, it will have to be controlled, much more stringently than it is controlled at present, if the social danger of uncontrolled

inflation is to be averted. But, granted this control, and supposing that the actual machinery of production is not broken down nor the inflow of necessary imports interrupted by enemy action, the solution of the economic impasse by a condition of permanent warfare is not impossible. Whether a sufficiency of human beings can be kept alive enough to maintain it is another question.

What we must realise is that stable peace would be even more revolutionary than war. The diversion of the energies of the nation from gratuitous war-production to equally gratuitous peace-production must now involve a social revolution, simply because millions of men will have to be secured a livelihood by the State. The choice with which the Government will be confronted will be the choice between employing these men on some kind of productive work, with no enemy to whom to give the product away, or paying them to be idle. Leaving morality out of the question, the former is an impossible task, the latter an impossible risk. An attempt would probably be made to compromise: to attempt something of the impossible task, and to take something of the impossible risk. But the period will be one of scarcely imaginable social fluidity, however much an influence making for stabilization may enter in by the fact that any peace that is not a mere armistice must contain arrangements for the international exchange of goods—a veritable exchange; not trade for profit, but pure barter—on an entirely new system, and on a far greater scale.

The opportunity and the need for social experiment in such a period of social fluidity will be enormous. In this situation the Christian community—to use the phrase in the most comprehensive sense possible—will have a vital function to perform, if Christians can rise to the occasion. It could create a new pattern of autonomous local society, wherein the life-values which will be threatened equally by the central control of production and by the maintenance on a dole of a new and still bigger army of unemployed, could be maintained and revived. My imagination cherishes, as a basic pattern or type of what needs to be aimed at, the re-formation of the rural community in fairly complete economic independence of surrounding society. Bodies of anything from fifty to five

hundred families, living their individual lives on a firm basis of subsistence-agriculture, in which full advantage was taken of the small machine, and exchanging the products of their particular crafts with one another. This is not the place to enter into the detailed economic working of such a community; the pure mechanics of it have been admirably formulated by Professor J. W. Scott. But it seems to me possible that the central government, if it is not overwhelmed by chaos or bemused by some totalitarian panacea, might welcome and support an economic and social development which offers to take something of the unendurable strain off the central mechanism. I am not thinking so much of government subsidy as of a government guarantee to the members of such a community of some minimal dole while they are engaged in establishing themselves. Assuredly, it would be willing to train prospective members in the special crafts which are essential to the life of such a community.

I have called it a Christian community, though in fact what is contemplated would be more truly called a natural community. But I believe that the natural community is the only solid and enduring foundation of the Christian community to-day. I do not profess to be able to anticipate what developments of human capacity and human morality are possible in a centrally planned and controlled society; but it is clear to me that the dangers of the coming society are enormous. In order that they may be reduced to a minimum, two things are necessary: first, the impregnation of the minority group which must in fact occupy the key-positions of such a society with a morality which inspires them to use their powers of control to encourage and develop the greatest possible freedom within the society. That is asking a very great deal: it is asking for something which the existing machinery of political democracy is not adapted to produce: a ruling-class morally and intellectually in advance of the electorate. The second thing that is necessary is the existence of voluntary associations of citizens determined to retain and develop all the freedom that is practically possible. This seems to me more hopeful, because it is in accord with the British tradition. But here the danger is that such voluntary associations may not be sufficiently realistic, not sufficiently aware of the

pressures with which they will have to contend in a centrally controlled society.

Obviously, it would be a superhuman task for any voluntary association to maintain itself in opposition to the declared will of the Government in a centralized society. The analogy of the persecuted yet finally triumphant Church does not serve us here. The powers of the central Government in modern society to influence and control its citizens are generally different from those possessed by the absolutisms of history; these modern powers are far more comprehensive, more continuous, and more intimate. If they are exercised by a Government which, conscious of the anarchy produced by the old freedoms, sees no good in encouraging new freedoms—and existing totalitarian Governments are of this kind—it is practically impossible for the voluntary association to exist. For it is not a question of resisting the demand of a Cæsar for a pinch of incense to his deity, but of resisting an infinite circumambience of social influences, in a society where a clear distinction between what is Cæsar's and what is God's is no longer possible at all.

One dares not be optimistic in these days; but it does seem possible, or even probable, that the kind of central Government with which we shall be saddled in Britain will be much more neutral towards freedom than any of the existing totalitarianisms. It will not have a positive totalitarian philosophy, like Communism or Nazism; it will rather be totalitarian in spite of itself. At least, it will not be animated by the definite will to destroy independent and voluntary associations.

Here, I anticipate, will be the opportunity of the Christian, or natural, community. If it can create a pattern of social existence which will enable it to function in relative autonomy, it may be allowed to exist. It may even be welcome, as indicating a way to take the strain off the central organization. Therefore I say that the Christian imagination should be occupied with the task of forming this new pattern of social existence. It should at least be preparing to establish self-subsistent communities at a new technical level, that is to say, communities which will take full advantage of the small machine. Historical analogies are terribly deceptive; but it

may help to convey the idea if I say that the aim should be the re-creation of the mediæval village-community at a new level of productive technique, and a new level of individual, and social, and religious awareness.

If the idea be not entirely misconceived—and I can only plead that it is the outcome of ten years of the hardest thinking of which I am capable—then evidently its realisation should be the concern of all Christians, without distinction of pacifist or non-pacifist. But the chance of its appealing to Christian pacifists is greater, because of their virtual extrusion from a society engaged in total war. On them, more immediately, is enforced the necessity of thinking down to their foundations; and, in practice, the necessity of forming communities of some kind—if only for spiritual fellowship. I ask that they should make this necessity their opportunity and, by deepening their social consciousness, overcome the ever-widening gulf between religious ideal and social reality. The Christian pacifist who accepts the social mechanism that makes for war is merely an extreme case of the religious individualist. Unless he is prepared to devote himself to the creation of a social order from which the inherent drive towards war has been eliminated he is what George Fox called a “notionist”—not in possession of that he talks of. With this, I suppose, most Christian pacifists would agree—in the abstract. The trouble is to get down to earth from the height of abstraction.

Here, I confess, I have little faith in large-scale political schemes of peace. I do not mean that peace—in the sense of the absence of war—may not be attained at the international level, though it seems more probable that it will be attained at that level through universal empire than by common consent. What I am convinced of is that, if pacifists make it their main effort to seek peace at the abstract political level, they will find that the reality of peace will escape them. Their main endeavour should be to create the visible and concrete pattern of a life of peace—and that is a life which satisfies the elemental human instincts, a life in which the individual is not sacrificed to the community, nor the community to the individual. On the large and national scale that harmony lies far ahead, on the further side of much travail and tribulation: for it is as certain as anything can be that we shall not

avoid a long and bitter period in which the individual will be sacrificed to the national community, not through deliberate ill-will, but from the sheer incapacity of society to solve its own problems save momentarily and by regimentation. The harmony between the individual and the community will have to be discovered at a simpler level, in a form of society in which the problems are not too gigantic for the society to grapple with, in which the consequences of men's social actions are immediately visible, and social injustice is at once obvious and remediable by personal and responsible acts. We must labour to create nuclei of a new community,—nuclei in which the will to good of the conscious man is not inhibited by his knowledge that in order to achieve anything substantial he must "remould the sorry scheme of things entire".

As Maritain has put it, we now live in a world in which "in order to change anything we must change everything". We cannot do it; we cannot even try to do it. Tell a man to lift a couple of hundred-weight, and he will do his utmost, and probably succeed. Tell him he must lift a locomotive and his heart will fail him. We must circumscribe our problem, in order that we may do what we can do, really and substantially do it, instead of pretending to do things that are of no ultimate avail.

CHAPTER VIII
PACIFISM AND REUNION

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CHAPTER VIII

PACIFISM AND REUNION

At a time when war is winnowing out our faith and revealing to us the significance and centrality of the Cross it ought to be possible to see the content of our religion in proportion. Certainly for many of us the effort to think our way through the moral and theological problems raised by our pacifism has meant a simplification of outlook. Much that had before seemed important shrinks into irrelevance; much that we had too easily tolerated has become manifestly a distortion, if not an apostasy. We see the Gospel focussed in the redemptive mystery of Calvary, Easter, Pentecost. We see it unique, essential—by the world denied and by the Church too often minimised and ignored. The Way of the Cross challenges and overthrows all human wisdom and statecraft and pietism: for it was the wisdom of the Sadducees, the politics of Pilate, the religion of the Pharisees that crucified Jesus. The Way of the Cross sifts and breaks even the disciples: confronted with a purpose which would neither fight nor fly, which staked life on the conviction that man's pride could never say the last word, they forsook Him and fled. Remembering these things we begin to realise how deeply our own faith is corrupted and compromised, and to understand the severity of the "woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" with which the Master condemned the churchmanship of the religion of Israel. How far are we also making the Word of God of none effect by our tradition? If we are honest with ourselves, we cannot evade that question or accept an easy acquittal.

Put otherwise the position would seem to be this. We have been led by sheer pressure of conviction to the conclusion that, in a matter of gravest moment, in the understanding and interpretation of the central event in the Christian revelation, we cannot accept the standpoint of the majority of our fellow-Churchmen. That is not a conclusion to be reached unadvisedly or wantonly, or in any spirit of self-reliance or

complacency. It can only be accepted with penitence and humility and under a sense of compelling restraint. The daily misery of finding ourselves isolated from our friends; the pull of affection that binds us to them, to our country, to our past; the knowledge of our own weakness and insufficiency; the petty persecution that our decision involves; all these things test our faith continually. If we could find an excuse for a change of opinion—as many, previously pacifists, have been able to do—if, without surrendering Christ, we could identify ourselves with the mass-emotion of the time or find escape from our loneliness by admitting the validity of the utterances of scholars and Bishops who affirm us to be in error, there is none of us who would not seize upon it with thankfulness. When the whole circumstances, and, not least, the magnanimity with which many of us have been treated, make the maintenance of our position almost intolerably painful, we ought at least to be cleared from any suspicion of wilful wrongheadedness or arrogant obstinacy. We stand where we do because, God knows, we can no other.

But if that be the case, then, being sure that in this matter our leaders and the bulk of our fellows are in grievous error, it is inevitable that we should scrutinise with new clarity the rest of the traditional beliefs that are current in our Church. If, in its interpretation of the primary Gospel, the Church has distorted its message, what weight can we attach to its conventional attitude towards less essential elements in its teachings? If war is a flat contradiction of the way of the Cross, can we regard our individual and social compromises, our acquiescence in economic and political worldliness, our sectarianisms and disunion as consistent with a true discipleship? Are we not inevitably bound to re-examine all our thought and practice in the light of the discovered antagonism between pacifism and the views of traditional orthodoxy? If, as we would claim, our rejection of war is a recovery of the primitive Christian ethic, ought we not to ask whether the other features of that ethic, its communism, its classlessness, its fellowship, its unity, are not worthy of our consideration? Can we who refuse to compromise in the matter of war be content to accept compromises hardly less glaring in other aspects of life?

Some of us long ago justified the concentration of thought upon the problem of war by the claim that only by isolating one concrete manifestation of evil could we gain clear insight or take decisive action. We saw that here was an issue not only urgent but representative; and we argued that just as Wilberforce and his friends fighting the case against slavery disclosed certain great principles of human freedom which made possible the work of Shaftesbury and Maurice, so if we could think out the case against war, we should be led to new insights into the tangled social evils of our time and find that what was valid in the one case was valid also over a much wider field. That belief is surely true. Pacifists in the tension of their thought on the one subject cannot fail to realise the wider implications of the results that they have reached. If military force is an instrument to be rejected as incompatible with God's victory, then analogous compulsions in industrial and political life cannot be accepted without question. If reconciliation is the only legitimate method in the strife of nations, can we refuse to employ it in the strife of classes or of communions?

All thinking pacifists have surely recognised that their convictions commit them to a way of life—that they cannot be Christians (as they desire to be) in the matter of military service and yet accept economic, political, and religious warfare as legitimate or even tolerable. Many of them have deliberately undertaken experiments in the building up of communities either, like that at Langham, for the development and possible reform of agricultural life, or for the more effective discharge of social service, or on an international basis. In addition men enrolled for duties alternative to the army—in ambulance or forestry units for example—have opportunities for voluntary regulation of their way of living which enable them to gain experience of new types of communal life. There are also the cells or branches of various pacifist or minority movements which, if not living under a common rule or with a common purse, are exploring methods which can set them free from dependence upon a social order whose basic principles they are constrained to condemn. In all such cases there is evidence of awakened conscience and of a conviction that pacifists are committed to something

much more radical and far-reaching than the refusal to bear arms. It may be that out of these experiments will come the power to translate some of the theories of social reform into practice, the models on which large-scale changes may hereafter be fashioned.

No one who realises how profoundly the fact of war is implied in and necessitated by our present social and industrial system, or how flatly this system contradicts Christian principles and values, will think lightly of such experiments or of the urgent need for a clearer understanding and a more drastic reconstruction of our way of life. The demand for the definition of our war aims; the insistence that we must even in the stress of conflict prepare for the establishment of peace; the recognition that a continuance of the social order which has made war endemic will be a betrayal or a degradation of our cause; these have influenced multitudes outside the ranks of professed pacifists. But upon pacifists must rest a special obligation. They are by their very isolation from the national effort given a detachment and an immunity from that increasing absorption in the mere struggle, that susceptibility to propaganda and bitterness which sterilise the good intentions of the combatant. It is notable that in the course of the past year Christian leaders identified with the national cause have become increasingly unable to control or even to criticise the course of policy; have allowed the Ministry of Information to tune the pulpits and censor the utterances of clergy without protest; and have agreed to keep silence on all subjects which, in the view of the civil authorities, may impair the unity or distract the energies of the nation. With these handicaps they can hardly be expected to think out or advocate changes that are more than trivial palliatives or pious platitudes.

Yet, though it is the obvious duty of pacifists to use their freedom from such handicaps, it may well be questioned whether the time for a fearless application of Christian principles to social and economic reform has yet arrived. Such application involves, not only a clear vision of the mind of Christ, but a clear knowledge of the circumstances in which that mind has to find expression. With a world whose whole material fabric is being shaken and in which no man can

foresee to what extent the destruction of life and resources will proceed or what effects it will accomplish, the attempt to draw up schemes for reconstruction is difficult if not futile. In the presence of death to consider the rebuilding of our barns and the better storing of our goods is to earn the rebuke in the parable. God has said "Thou fool" to all our plans and programmes and given us cause and opportunity to concentrate upon more important concerns. Those of us who have long felt that the efforts of C.O.P.E.C. or of Oxford failed, not in the quality of their proposals but in the lack of dedication and dynamic, will hesitate to divert energy required for the central business of religion to enquiries which must be tentative and theoretical. What we need for the light and warmth of the home of humanity is not so much re-wiring and fixtures, as power for current; and this means service in the power-house of faith and prayer rather than concern for the subsidiary tasks of distribution and equipment.

Yet, in so arguing, we must not forget that devotion which does not find an outlet in action is short-lived and ineffective. A religion, a theology, and a cultus which do not issue in practical expression, but are turned in upon themselves, become first "precious" and then putrid. Worship and service, the love of God and the doing of His work, cannot be separated. For pacifists, cut off as they are from many fields of activity, there is real danger of a quietist and contentedly escapist piety which, accepting the uselessness or the prohibition of Christian activities, retreats into a world of detachment and (ultimately) self-culture. Admittedly it is not easy when our spheres of ministry are curtailed and we are excluded from the friendly intimacies of Christian fellowship not to feel a measure of isolation or to shrink back into solitary enjoyment of communion with God. If men cannot accept us, at least His presence-chamber remains open. Let us find compensation there, and, for the time, let the wild world go its own way. Encouraged as we have been by the generosity of our Archbishops and by the sympathy of many who do not share our pacifism, a sense of helplessness is apt to inhibit the desire for action and to drive us in upon ourselves.

This double difficulty, the feeling that an outlet in social reconstruction is impracticable and that our contribution to

Christian activity is undesired, ought not to hinder us from finding a sphere of action in the one realm which remains open and which is perhaps of primary importance. If we cannot practise the early Christian communal life on its economic side, we can surely make a fresh effort to recover its unity. The fact that our stand against war is shared by a large number of Christians in every communion, Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, and Unitarians, has brought us into a new relationship with members of those bodies and, in many cases, disclosed to us a profound experience of fellowship with them in Christ. They share our understanding of the Way of the Cross; they share our conviction that only by this Way was our redemption achieved once and can be fulfilled to-day. In the light of our agreement here, our differences in other matters can hardly divide us; in any case we see them from a new angle and approach them in a new spirit. It ought to be our task, not indeed to pretend that what divides us is unimportant or negligible, but to reassess our differences from the standpoint of experienced unity and in the certainty that, in the central mystery of the faith, we are at one with them. Drawn together inevitably by our comradeship in pacifism, co-operating in the common councils and concerns that our pacifism involves, strengthened by their writings and speech, and by their witness to our cause, we must surely rethink our attitude towards the whole matter of denominational exclusiveness and, if our minds remain obdurate, let our hearts guide us towards a reconciliation.

That is not a mere sentimentalism. Anyone who has pondered the matter of reunion will have realised that the contrast between the relative success of the Conferences at Stockholm and Oxford and the manifest failure of those at Lausanne and Edinburgh was not due to difference in the difficulty of the issues discussed. The problems of Life and Work are not simpler nor less divisive than those of Faith and Order. The contrast was due to difference of feeling and temper. In Life and Work there was a sense of sharing in a great adventure: social evils were so obvious, Christian obligations so plain, that men discovered the joy of co-operation and the worth of those who disagreed with them. There was a strong

experience of fellowship and, consequently, a capacity for creative thought and action. In Faith and Order the attitude of the delegates was different. They assembled, not with the consciousness of a common task too big for any one of them to solve or a readiness for the discovery of a new and better way, but as trustees of vested interests, unwilling to make concessions in respect to their own tradition and determined not to let the other man impose his views. It was not the spirit of a fellowship that dominated them, but the spirit of a representative committee; and from such a body no creative result, nothing indeed except a highest common factor of human infirmity, can proceed. God cannot accomplish His will through unreconciled personalities: and, so long as members of different communions are armoured against one another, convinced of their own rightness, resolved not to yield an inch of their prejudices or be betrayed into admitting the validity of the other man's arguments, the result can only be a triumph for human cleverness, not a revelation of the mind of God.

No one who knows the history of the divisions or the character of the denominations of Christendom will wish to pretend that the problems of Faith and Order can be solved merely by good will or mutual affection. There is need here, as in Life and Work, for clear thinking and spiritual effort. But no one, least of all a pacifist, will deny that the attitude of self-righteousness and contempt or the methods of argument and controversy defeat all prospect of a worthy result. War, even if it is a war of words, does not create: it can only destroy. Unless we can approach the subject of our divisions in a spirit of friendship and trust, sure of our underlying unity, sure of the other man's discipleship, sure of our own need for forgiveness and enlightenment, unity will never be achieved or, if it is imposed for prudential or financial reasons, will not be more than a lie. A new temper, a new relationship of understanding and sympathy, is the first essential. We ought to be able, under present experiences, to contribute to it.

Our principles and our circumstances as pacifists combine to lay upon us a heavy responsibility in this matter. We are committed in a special sense to a ministry of reconciliation

and, as members of a minority within our own Church are drawn into contacts and co-operation with Christians of other denominations. Here is a field of activity that we are free to occupy, a field which we cannot escape from occupying. It is a field of enormous potential importance; for, challenged as Christendom now is by rivals and enemies of enormous power, the Churches must close their ranks if they are to make any effective witness to their faith. "That they all may be one . . . that the world may believe." Reunion would seem by that utterance to be the necessary prelude to evangelism.

At this point it may well be asked whether this insistence does not in fact envisage the emergence of a new united pacifist communion, a sort of Confessional Church constituted by those who, ostracised for their pacifism by their own communions, are driven into an alliance in schism. That is, as we were warned at Oxford, a not impossible contingency. There are signs already that our own Ministry of Information is adopting a religious policy identical with that of the Minister of Religion in Nazism—a policy which would limit the preaching of the gospel to those who are identified with the national cause, dictate the content of the Christian message, and frankly subordinate the cause of Christ to that of Cæsar. In such circumstances loyalty to Churches which accepted such dictation would become difficult—indeed for some of us impossible. We should be constrained to follow Niemöller's example and to band ourselves together to resist State-domination. Such a situation might arise—though surely pacifists would not have to stand alone in their protest. But, if it did, schism and the unity of the Confessionals might result.

Nevertheless the claim^m that the reunion of Christendom is a cause of immediate practical importance is calculated not to increase the likelihood of such schism but to prevent it. It might be sufficient to argue that, granted the real risk of further schism, the way to meet it is not to ignore the possibility but to resist it by concentrating upon the need and practicability of union. This, after all, is the method by which St. Paul met the dangers and problems of his own day: he did not evade them: he wrestled with them until the very

fact which threatened evil became an occasion for greater good. At Corinth he was confronted by moral and religious controversies which divided his converts as the Churches to-day are divided over the problem of war: he did not say, "Pretend that these differences do not exist": he did not say, "These differences must be ignored": he set the controversies against the background of unity in Christ, disclosed the reality and implications of that unity, and, with an infinity of labour and patience, led his little community to a fullness of experience in which their differences ceased to divide and became opportunities for increasing sympathy and deepened brotherhood. If, in these days, we can explore the riches of our common loyalty to Christ, we, whether we be "the weak" or "the strong", will learn a new reverence for our brothers, a refusal to condemn, a willingness to accept and profit from our ostracism. We shall exorcise the spirit of schism, even if we do so by discovering the pettiness, the unnecessary and evil pettiness, of our sectarianisms.

But there is more to be said. Reunion is a cause in which, though pacifists may have a special opportunity, their fellows could and surely would co-operate with them; a cause therefore which, instead of increasing our isolation, would draw us into closer partnership with those from whom our attitude towards war now divides us. The urgency of that cause should not need stating if it were not that so many of us, even now in the crisis of a struggle which we profess to regard as a war for Christian civilization, do not seem to see it.

Put it first on its lowest grounds. Quite evidently the continued efficacy, even the continued existence, of the Churches as we know them is not merely precarious but perhaps improbable. In Anglicanism the increase in the cost of maintenance and of living is already breaking down the parochial system even in those areas where it has not become an anachronism. There is something so radically wrong with a system which allows any young man, however destitute of powers of leadership, to be put in sole and irremovable control of a parish five or six years after his ordination, which allows no scope to the specialist, which expects every priest to be able to sing and preach, to teach and visit, to cure souls and to raise his quota, that some of us will see it pass away without

any but sentimental regret. But, in its passing, it will involve a wastage of human material, a heartbreak of poverty and unemployment, a sense of frustration and embitterment which will go far to inhibit all effective witness to Christ. Far too many clergy are already living under the pressure of debt or of intolerable anxieties: resources are squandered in the effort to build parish churches, each competing with the chapel round the corner if not with the church a mile away each equipped with vicar and vicarage, organist, choir, vergers, Sunday-school, and all the traditional apparatus, while men are ill-chosen, ill-trained, ill-paid, ill-cared for, and, when put into positions for which they are manifestly incompetent ("who is sufficient for these things?"), are ground down by the demands for statistical and monetary proofs of their efficiency. They have no time to pray or study: no time to stand aside from the daily round of stereotyped duties and ask what purpose it fulfils; no time for peace or joy and hardly time for love. Unless some great pooling of resources, some radical redistribution of the means and man-power of Christendom, is accomplished, we shall see Hitler's prediction fulfilled: only instead of losing ground slowly we shall experience a sudden collapse. Reunion may well be forced upon us by practical and economic pressure; and Mammon may effect what the love of Christ has been powerless to achieve.

Such a picture presents the matter in terms of expediency, the lowest terms. Put it on a higher level. We are still in a very real sense a Christian country. In spite of a monstrously antiquated system, in spite of evils and inefficiencies which would be grotesque if they were not so familiar that we hardly notice them, a vast wealth of devotion and capacity is to be found among the clergy and ministers of the country, wealth which, rightly and co-operatively used, might be potent for evangelism. But the people whom we would evangelise, though deeply conscious of the need for religion and ready to respond to the good news of Christ, are not concerned with, are indeed antagonised by, our denominationalisms. They fail to see that man's spiritual needs are met by theories about the method of Church-government, and that his salvation depends upon whether the Church is ruled by annually

changing moderators or life-long bishops: if they think about it at all, they feel that autocratic authority is less congruous with Christianity than democratic assemblies, that the eighteenth-century garb and my-lording of bishops are an anachronism, and that the absorption of the clergy in minutiae of ritual and doctrine has little in common with the life and teaching of Jesus. If we could put first things first, they might be won: they will not be won by exclusiveness, and the *odium theologicum*: and among first things unity has a strong claim to pre-eminence. United evangelism has, as experience proves, a deep and lasting effect: sectarian efforts, by their insistence on matters which the people regard as unimportant, only appeal to the ecclesiastically minded—and they are a negligible minority.

Further, our disunion not only frustrates our appeal, it creates (unanswerably) a conviction of our hypocrisy. The point was bluntly presented to me years ago by a great man of affairs, Christian in life and outlook, deeply concerned for the future of religion. We were discussing the relations between employers and employed and had drifted from that to the League of Nations and economic co-operation. "Well, padre," he concluded, "I will listen to you pleading that capital and labour should recognise their common interests and that statesmen should unite at Geneva when I see Anglicans and Free Churchmen, Romans and Quakers meeting together to co-ordinate their work. Till then you are a fraud. Set your own house in order. It isn't fair to expect others to do what you can't or won't do yourselves." How can one answer such a criticism? We remember that at Oxford Christians found it possible to urge industrialists and politicians to change their outlook, surrender their personal ambitions, work together for the common good, and that at Edinburgh Christians clung to their own prerogatives, refused to give up their vested interests, found it impossible to surmount the barriers of sectarianism. Is there any escape from the charge of hypocrisy, of play-acting? "Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye . . . when thou regardest not the beam that is in thine own eye." We are disqualified from exhorting others to unity and radical reform so long as we maintain disunion and refuse to abate our pretensions

in the one sphere in which we carry a direct responsibility. It is surely time that we ceased preaching co-operation to others until we have succeeded in practising what we preach among ourselves. It is not sufficient for us to talk piously about the scandal of our unhappy divisions, when we show little sign of realising the gravity of that scandal—that it is literally a stumbling-block in the way of those who are seeking the fellowship of Christ. If we were honest we should acknowledge that, by our obduracy, we are making the word of God of none effect. And, for such sinners the Master reserved His sternest condemnation.

This does not mean that the issues that divide us are trivial or easy of solution. Cherished privileges, venerable dogmas, time-honoured institutions—these cannot be lightly dismissed or carelessly abandoned. Those who have found their own richest religious experience in the eucharist and their most precious possession in the priesthood will rightly value the order that has preserved for them this heritage and will guard it, if not with jealousy, at least with full conviction of its worth. Few of us, even if we are among those who feel that all matters of order are secondary and legitimately reformable, will wish to see questions of profound significance to many of our fellows settled on grounds of expediency or of sentiment. Few perhaps will expect, or even hope, to see rapid agreements reached. But surely none who appreciate the gravity of the need for reunion will be content to go slowly from motives of fear or exclusiveness; and none who study the facts will deny that our failures hitherto have been due more to the temper in which the subject has been treated than to its intrinsic difficulty. We have striven not for peace but for victory and have made submission the condition of unity. That is to say we have carried the spirit of war and the will to domination into our debates; and this has not only destroyed the possibility of creative action but blinded us to the character and consequences of our arguments.

One example of such blindness may be seen in the oft-repeated slogan that inter-communion must mark the end of the movement towards reunion but cannot be used as a means towards it. This is, of course, a flat denial of the very nature of a sacrament; for a sacrament is not only a symbol

of something given and attained but an instrument to its fuller reception and achievement. To restrict the sacrament of unity to its symbolic meaning, to strive for unity and yet refuse to employ the instrument appropriate to such a quest, is to fall into a grievous theological and religious error.

But a more significant example arises out of the fact of Quakerism. No honest observer will doubt that the Society of Friends has a record of Christian achievement higher than that of any other denomination in Britain. If other Churches with far larger numbers and resources had done what the Friends did for the relief and reconstruction of Europe after the last war, the present calamities would almost certainly never have arisen. If other Churches cared for peace and worked for reconciliation as the Quakers have done, the scandal of warring Christians would long ago have been removed. "By their fruits ye shall know them." No one who accepts and applies that test will dare to deny that the Society of Friends is manifestly within the fellowship of the disciples, the blessed community, the Church which is the Body of Christ. Yet, if so, then the Lambeth Quadrilateral is unsound; sacraments and orders are not of the essence of the Church; the whole position needs rethinking and restatement. When the Lausanne Conference decided that the Society of Friends was outside the Church, it surely said in effect, "This man casts out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils"—a saying which led to a stern utterance about unforgivable sin. For if the Conference only meant that, though the Friends did not belong to the visible Church a place might yet be found for them in the invisible, it exposed itself to the criticism that it is the primary task of the visible to fashion itself after the pattern of that which it claims to represent, or even, for those who apply the test of fruits, to the retort that, if so, membership in the visible Church must be a handicap rather than a help.

It is necessary to state the position strongly because, in this matter of reunion we are all accustomed to acquiesce in unexamined and unsound axioms, liable to a Pharisaism which rejects Christ because He does not walk after the tradition of the elders. "I am of Cephas and I of Apollos" is an attitude of which members of a minority like our pacifist

selves ought to appreciate the attractiveness. Knowing the peril of such sectionalism we ought surely to do our utmost to free ourselves from it in our dealings with other Christians; to repent; to change our outlook; and to bring forth fruit worthy of our repentance. And here is a field in which a change of heart must be the prelude to a change of system.

As we are drawn to a deeper apprehension of the Cross—and this is at once the basis of our pacifism and the core of the gospel—we shall surely find the power for such repentance. The cultured world crucified Him because He seemed to threaten their economic security and worldly wisdom; the political world crucified Him because He did not observe their regulations or conform to their orthodoxy. They condemned Him, and were themselves condemned. We who plainly stand again at a Gethsemane have only one challenge to face: are we at this moment of testing about to forsake Him and flee? If we are not to do so, we shall need a faith in Him, a love for Him, far greater than we have known, and with it a forgiveness, a generosity, a kinship uniting us with all our fellow-disciples such as our present sectarianism denies and inhibits. "For their sakes I sanctify myself"—that is the Johannine version of the prayer in the Agony—"that they all may be one . . . that the world may believe". Can our ministry of reconciliation involve less than this?

What then are we to do? It is obvious that the Churches, and still less our own minority in them, cannot attempt or expect to revise the findings of Lausanne and Edinburgh while œcumenical co-operation is impossible: nor can they wisely initiate concrete proposals for reunion. But they can change their outlook; take a fresh and whole-hearted interest in united efforts, local and central; set up or revive united councils for common thought and action; plan in concert the measures necessitated by the destruction of Church and Chapel buildings; and throw themselves into united evangelism such as is now being proposed by the Methodists. Far too many of us are still unused to praying together, to the interchange of pulpits, to the holding of united services; and in consequence prone to criticise things of which we have no experience. It ought not to be difficult in every locality to

initiate a fellowship of clergy and ministers for the sole purpose of seeking a deeper knowledge and a truer love of Christ, a fellowship which should cut across the barriers raised by pacifism and speedily expand into the sort of movement which the Archbishop of York outlined in his supplement to the Christian News-letter. Whatever programmes of reconstruction and reform may become practicable will certainly fail unless there is behind them a solid and convinced Christian consciousness. Now, while the future is black and blank before us, is the time for renewing our resources of prayer and of comradeship. Those who in this time of testing have found a faith to live by cannot but stand together in the effort to share and express it.

CHAPTER IX
PACIFISM AND SOCIAL REFORM

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CHAPTER IX

PACIFISM AND SOCIAL REFORM

THE late Studdert Kennedy used to say that he never knew how to answer a man who asked if he were a socialist because the word "socialist" meant so many different things to different people. His questioner might conceive of a socialist as an unmitigated rogue or as one of the finest representative types of humanity.

The same thing applies to the word "pacifism". Not all pacifists mean the same thing by "pacifism" and the divergence of meaning attached to the word by unbelievers is considerable. So I introduce myself as one who sees "social" relations as an essential concern in the practice of Christian Pacifism.

My first years with the Fellowship of Reconciliation in England bring back memories of conferences at which the question of the Fellowship taking a stand or defining its attitude to the social question was a matter for deep searchings of heart. So it is clear that by no means all Christian pacifists feel that the social problem as such is a concern of Christian pacifism as such. There is, of course, a divided mind in the Christian churches about the extent to which the Church should concern herself with social problems, and it would seem possible, or even likely, that, in regard to social questions, pacifists might find themselves aligned with fellow Church members with whom they were at divergence on the issue of peace and war.

It is important, therefore, for those who agree on general grounds that social reform is a concern of pacifists to consider just how and why. Mere "betterment" cannot be our chief aim any more than the mere avoidance of death and pain is the main consideration in our attitude to war. This is the answer to the accusation that there was an atmosphere about the preaching of such men as Kennedy and Dick Sheppard which "suggests that it is meant to secure the maximum

amount of moral enthusiasm with the minimum amount of serious action. Hence it eschews politics, is above party, and carefully avoids taking sides in all real issues which confront the modern world".

The quotation is from an article, "The Jesus of History", in the book *Christianity and the Social Revolution*, published in 1935. "Serious action" would seem to mean to the writer of this article participation in class or party strife, for on the following page he tells us that we cannot expect "any recovery of the Jesus of History in those who . . . flinch from class and party strife". The reluctance of some pacifists to give consideration to the social question may arise from their identification of socialism with class war.

On the other hand we pacifists shall continually incur the reproach of negativism unless we are prepared to be realists and accept existing facts, one of which is the existence of disease in the social order. This seems to be the moral of Drucker's book, *The End of Economic Man*, recommended by J. B. Priestley in one of his broadcast talks. I find much in his book exceedingly difficult to follow, but in his general outlook it is clear, first, that he considers the issues of international war and the social problem are closely related, and, secondly, that he thinks the Churches' lack of realism has issued in a stultifying failure to apply their convictions to practical action.

That there is an economic cause of wars is a commonplace, and it is not necessary to add to the literature on the subject. Even my school text-books explained most lucidly that England's wars of the eighteenth century were commercial wars, though possibly the writer of those days did not realise the implication, which is now an accepted truism (except possibly to the most hard-baked reactionary politician) that the industrial expansion of the modern world renders wars almost inevitable.

A recognition of this fact need not land us in an acceptance of a Marxist hypothesis of the sole cause of war being economic. But it should lead us to examine the connection between war and the social order as at present constituted. (Drucker, by the way, says that the order has already passed and that there will be no return. Various others agree with this.)

It is unrealistic to oppose war and accept, or be complacent about, compromise with a system which makes war inevitable. There is an evil to be dealt with, an evil which produces strife among men.

I want at this point to interpose a caution to those who have sought to urge a negotiated peace with Germany—still more to those who are still urging it. I would have them reflect that Christ did not negotiate with Caiaphas or Pilate; if we cannot hope to persuade a nation unconverted to pacifism to accept the way of suffering as we see it, it is surely something like compromising with the power of evil to advocate more of the policy of "appeasement" which has brought us to this present pass. However much we may feel that war is not the right method of meeting the power of evil, we need not deny the existence of that power nor the possibility that it may be manifested in the flesh. A society which still believes in curing disease by killing the patient will, nevertheless, not be helped by denying the reality of the disease. This is the negativism which (as I see it at least) so much weakens the case for "Christian Science", which would seem to expend a magnificent faith on opposing something it professes has no real existence.

So Drucker. "Just as liberals and socialists believe against all evidence that the real majority of Italians and Germans are secretly opposed to Mussolini and Hitler, so the Churches believe against all evidence (including that of their own persecution) that Franco is a Christian soldier, that Hitler and Mussolini are really saving the world from Bolshevism—or, at least, that they occasionally go too far in revolutionary zeal, but must be all right since they are anti-materialist and anti-mechanist." As evidence of the truth of the second part of this statement I would instance the fact that some three years or so ago a staunch member of my congregation said, "We simply must re-arm with all these communists about". We would not have been so easily fooled by Hitler if we had not previously accepted the idea of a communist menace.

However, let us return to our main theme. Christian Pacifism is not dualistic if it believes, not only in an unseen evil power, but in its manifesting itself in human agents.

Those Germans who, in the bitterness of exile, have returned to the utterances of apocalyptic faith do at least bring us back to an essential truth in a world which has tended to deny the reality of evil. Belief in evil need not render us defeatist or quiescent.

The question we must answer if we are to accept the claim of the social question to our concern is whether we believe in "social" evil in addition to individual evil, an evil which is not just the sum total of evil in separate individuals. That there are evil people who do evil and that we are pledged to seek the Christian way of dealing with them we agree. And, surely, our concern with war (and even the desire for negotiations) shows that we recognise some form of corporate evil. Unless we are prepared to accept as perfect some form of social order with which we happen to be in contact or of which we happen to approve, we must recognise the fact of evil in the social order. Few would deny that mass unemployment is an evil; will anyone maintain that any individual is responsible? Even those who seek to put the sole responsibility for war on one man would hardly undertake to find an individual responsible for a world-wide evil. And we may note in passing that few pacifists would accept the thesis of the sole guilt of Hitler, which would indicate that we have at least a belief in corporate responsibility.

I want to suggest that the philosophy of pacifism applies as much to corporate issues as to personal—to corporate issues which may have an international content and to those which may have a primary content within any one nation's life. I want to throw out a suggestion as to the real "modernism" of a philosophy of pacifism which ought to commend it to the intelligentsia. For I doubt whether we have as yet solved the practical problem of its application to corporate life. It might be helpful if we would face more fully and more often the charge of negativism and the failure of the Churches to apply Christianity to corporate life. We must have a consciousness of failure if we are to be aware of a need for remedial action. I cannot claim to be able to propound a specific; the most I can hope is to make a contribution to a consideration of the lines along which the problem may be tackled. I think it is along the lines where pacifism is modern that a solution

might be sought. That Society has to solve this problem of corporate relationship or perish is almost a truism; that a true interpretation of Christianity can provide a solution is a belief accepted in widening circles, while some of us have the deep conviction that only thus can a solution be found. For us it is imperative that we face this problem.

We must begin by examining methods of dealing with evil in individuals. The extreme treatment of early Victorian days must have been based, if on any theory, on the idea that each individual was solely responsible for the evil in him and had deliberate intent to injure the community thereby. There is no need to go into details concerning the treatment meted out to offenders against the law and to unfortunate lunatics; nor need we trace the story of reform and of the courageous souls who were pioneers of a better way. It would be true to say that the pioneers were moved rather by humanitarian motives—deeply Christian in many cases—than by scientific theories, but at some stage two practical ideas became merged in the theories which directed the treatment of criminals. One, that treatment, punitive for its own sake, was not deterrent to other potential criminals; the other that Society would gain by the reclamation of the offender.

So far as my knowledge goes, it was in the realm of the education of the child that psychological principles for dealing with recalcitrant individuals were first applied, and I am not at all clear if Madame Montessori is to be accounted as the exponent or precursor of psychological methods. In some quarters a violent reaction to the Victorian attitude of "spare the rod and spoil the child", combined with too little knowledge of psychology brought the new treatment into disrepute. Some definition of what is to be understood by "psychological methods" of dealing with individuals must be attempted as "psychology" is another of those blessed words which imply a variety of things; some pacifists may be inclined to put down the book at the mere mention of psychology.

There are three main "schools" of psychology represented by Freud, Adler, and Jung. More fundamental than their divergences is the question whether true psychology really seeks to reduce all human action to a system of "conditioned

reflexes". One has heard the word "behaviourism" in this connection. It would appear to be a new variation of the old mechanistic theories of life, saving the trouble of denying the freedom of the will by abolishing the will. But it seems a pity to discredit all psychology as if it were all based on a mechanistic assumption, and anyone who from prejudice (possibly contracted from a wholly irrelevant antagonism engendered by an overdose of Freud) is disposed to sweep aside psychology as having no appeal or argument for a Christian man, is advised to read Jung's *Modern Man in search of a Soul*.

There he will find a humble-minded philosopher who assures us that little psychological treatment is of lasting value if it is not related to religion. If it has happened to any of us to be put off by "freak" children who run riot and rebel against any control we need not treat the newest modern science with the fatal misunderstanding which for years produced the "conflict" between religion and science.

I fancy that the objection some feel to psychological methods as in some way antagonistic to religion has its basis in this issue of the nature of sin and its incidence in the life of the individual. Some theologians say there is no evil except an evil will. I do not want to embark on a theological argument for which I have little qualification, but I would ask anyone who is inclined to be dogmatic to consider whether this is really a complete interpretation. I would entirely endorse the theme that God will not impute to us sin when we err unwittingly and from ignorance, and, indeed, I am prepared to join issue with those who argue as if there were some concrete substance which they call "moral law" which has an independent existence outside and apart from individuals and the action of their will. Sin, I think, consists of knowingly doing what we are convinced is wrong.

Fundamentally, our emotions may be a problem of metaphysics, but most anti-social conduct seems to have some kind of connection with the emotions of those who act wrongly against Society. "The evil that I would not, that I do." It is true that psychology has been thought to be more concerned with developing the independence of the individual than with his social behaviour. And in some cases independence

has, therefore, been associated with a justification of an irresponsibility amounting to sinfulness. But, in just the same way, pacifists have been supposed to sanction and endorse anti-social conduct in refusing to meet the violence of an aggressor with violence. There is a middle road between suppression by violence and the toleration of that liberty—whether in the individual or in another nation—which is the licence to do “as I like” regardless of the other person or nation. It is this middle road which pacifism, no less than reputable psychology, exists to discover. So long as our pacifist faith rests on the basis of an assurance that the individual can be redeemed by “suffering” him, the relevance of the best psychological methods to our faith should be apparent.

Our opponents continually use illustrations which, to us, are absurdly irrelevant in order to discredit us. It is not so long since an Anglican Bishop tried to draw a parallel between disarmament and the permitting of a lunatic to exterminate one's family. All violent anti-social conduct has in it a certain affinity with lunacy; it is in many cases merely a matter of degree. We do not cease to advocate the restraint of lunatics because, in common with our public authorities, we no longer believe that the way to do it is to load them with chains, still less to shoot them out of hand.

That an understanding of the right method is not easy and the practice of it still more difficult we freely recognize. No thoughtful person has ever imagined the Christian way of life to be easy. The danger is illustrated by the experience of prison authorities. Courses of psychology were at one time given in our prisons and text books on psychology were issued to prisoners from the prison libraries. The growth of an idea that they were not responsible for their anti-social actions and that they were the victims of a repressive social order was so wide-spread that the authorities stopped these courses.

Anyone with a distrust of psychology may at this point try to take advantage of this as an argument against my own case. He will say that the extent of this trouble in the prisons is a sufficient proof that all psychological text-books instil a behaviourist philosophy into their readers. To me this is nearly as absurd as to stop the medicinal use of strychnine

because someone has died as a result of taking the whole bottle of the medicine containing strychnine at one dose. Public authorities are notorious for emptying out the baby with the bath water when their schemes go astray owing to insufficient preparation. The fact that the application of a method can go wrong by no means proves that it is a wrong method. Even pacifism may lead to the Cross.

After all, the whole trend of modern evolutionary progress has surely been in the direction of reconciling the claims of the individual with those of the society in which he lives, and the present breakdown is admittedly a failure of European society to solve this problem. The wheel has come full circle and repressed individuals now immolate themselves by cringing obedience to dictatorial commands. Freud would have a ready explanation of the phenomenon; the explanation would find its support in the pages of Drucker though he does not use psychological terms. (The explanation I am suggesting is that this is a form of masochism, just as the brutality of the henchmen of the dictators is a form of sadism.)

It seems to me to be much more the business of religion to face problems of the reconciliation of individuals with the society in which they live than to find new theologies. Need I say I believe that no solution of this problem can be found which does not rest on the reconciliation of the individual to God? Others are dealing with this aspect of the problem. For myself, I can only say that at the moment I find it easier to believe in God than in my fellow men, and, moreover, it has always seemed to me easier to expound and even to hold a faith in God than to work out and practise the implications of that faith in human relationships.

That Christ was the great Healer no one will dispute nor that He had a way with those oppressed by the devil whom we style demoniacs. Society still fears the method when it is called to pay the price by the loss of its pigs.

To return to our refractory child. Pioneering education authorities have now established clinics where the misfit is dealt with; I would like to pay tribute to the experiments of the Birmingham Education Authority in this work. Boys, whose failure to respond to the discipline of school is largely occasioned by home conditions, go to the clinic; the fact that

the new treatment succeeds in so many cases in spite of the fact that boys still have to live in their homes, is testimony to the efficacy of the method. Jung would be the first to agree that religion is needed to ensure lasting results.

The interesting thing about this is that, whereas trouble begins in the narrower environment of the home, healing is found in "society"—that is in the weird circle—which happens, of course, to be one specially provided for the need. But the treatment when successful continues to have its effect in other circles. Sceptics about psychological methods may take note of what has been a common experience in schools for generations before any particular method as such was evolved. Boys coming from the East where they had been accustomed to lord it over eastern servants were found to be a source of trouble in their first terms at schools. But the influence of the new environment made itself felt in those cases where discipline was exercised over these boys in an intelligent and not in a repressive manner.

An experiment resting on similar theory has been made on a big scale in an American institution, the name and location of which I am now unable to trace. From small beginnings this has grown into a vast plant embodying school and factory, combining education with industrial and other work in such a way as to show the vital connection between them. The difficult boy who will not learn at school and is a perpetual source of trouble at home is taken round until some particular activity attracts his attention. He is then allowed an approach in the nature of play or hobby until it is certain that this is really the particular activity which can claim his attention in earnest. He is then started at it and allowed to consider the snags caused by his own ignorance—maybe in practical knowledge, maybe in book-learning, mathematics, or whatever it is that is necessary as the basis of the activity. Then in a large percentage of successful cases he can be induced to settle down to work in earnest.

The success of American democracy (and, if there has been failure, and admitting that democracy everywhere is on its trial, no one will wish to deny the success) is largely an illustration of the possibilities of effecting a similar reclamation through Society. The original American community grew

up as the result of resistance to a government which seemed to them to be acting in a repressive manner. Students of American history will realize that the difficulty they found in organizing armed resistance to the mother country was as nothing compared with the difficulty they met with in establishing a settled government.

The weakness of the central Federal Government of the U.S.A. can be argued ad nauseam by political scientists. It remains true that the U.S.A. have succeeded in absorbing a large number of the malcontents of Europe, and the interesting writings of Steiner (a Professor of Religion, who, being himself an immigrant, has made the care of the immigrant his special concern) show that in the second generation these for the most part become good citizens; and that in spite of the by-no-means-enlightened attitude of American industrialists. There is sufficient evidence here to show that it is possible to secure the well-being of industrial workers in their individual lives without using the wasteful method of strikes.

It would, however, be well to interpose a caution. There are too many signs of a failure to secure economic welfare in the U.S. to justify pressing home the last point. My personal opinion is that the failure to evolve a strong and constitutional form of Trade-Unionism has been a factor of much unnecessary failure to secure better working conditions. Similarly it is admitted that the gangster problem (the problem of the anti-social individual run riot) at one time seriously threatened the stability of American society. But we pacifists are surely aware, not only that the failure of a method in certain cases does not condemn the method, but that in a large number of cases a method like Christianity itself has been condemned which has never been really consistently and persistently tried out.

Canon Raven in a recent conference gave striking support to the idea that a true democracy must be the political equivalent of the Christian community. Criticizing Reinold Niebuhr's *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, I understood him to say that Niebuhr maintains that man in the group always demonstrated the herd mind—that he follows the leading of the worst members of the group. This Canon Raven says

is simply not true or there would have been no Christian Church.

No doubt the cynic would find support for this theory of the inevitability of the herd mind in a study of European diplomacy before the last war or in our reversion to power politics before the present one. This tendency of groups to exhibit the herd mind is surely only symptomatic of the power of evil and is paralleled by frequent cases of individuals who relapse after a sincere conversion. One of our incidental troubles to-day is a tendency to magnify evil (as an alternative to denying its existence) which is partly the effect of the magnifying of all our activities by our modern inventiveness. So we are beginning to think that this war is the worst the world has ever known which is only true, if at all, in a quantitative sense not in a qualitative.

We have, perhaps, reached the crux of our theme. Our pacifism seeks a relationship with individuals which will endure all things, but which, nevertheless, seeks the redemption of the individual. It need not, and does not (as Christ did not) allow brutality to go unrebuked, but it does not seek to inflict it in return. But, our present contention is that, while on the one hand, no individual is redeemed whom we can love as an individual but who remains anti-social in his general habits, so, on the other hand, there has clearly been some failure if individuals exude personal goodwill while tolerating conditions which make corporate relationships oppressive. The best natured employer who knows his workers and their families by their Christian names does not guarantee that the wages he is paying shall be fair. All other things being equal he may still be unable to pay fair wages on account of his lack of success in his enterprise. And the success of *his* enterprise may imply the failure of that of others.

How does a Christian community deal with the economic problem indicated? So far we have sought to show that a well-ordered community can redeem difficult individuals by incorporating them into itself. No one will dispute that this is the sort of thing that the early Christian community achieved; others will add the religious implications of this. I have already explained that I have no ready-made solution

up my sleeve to questions of the above kind. What I am concerned to show is that the mere fact that groups and communities produce disordered individuals is a sufficient proof that they are far from being wholly Christian.

Nor do I think I am labouring the obvious. The Churches are inclined to think a community Christian if its individuals are "good". Hear Drucker again:

"Perhaps the clearest and most pathetic example of the social failure of Christianity is that of the brave and valiant leader of the German Confessional Movement—Pastor Niemöller. None shows better that the quest for a new basis of society is the motive for turning towards Christianity. Niemöller . . . searched for a new society first among the socialist and communist workers in the coal mines and then, after disillusionment, among the first Nazi radical groups. Finally he turned toward religion. He found in religion an individual peace and haven, an individual mission and faith. But he did not find in it a lesson for society. He opposes Nazism from the basis of an individual conscience; but, though he wants to, he cannot find any constructive opposition to it on social grounds. He realises that freedom and social totalitarianism implied destruction of the political of religion as well. Yet he cannot develop any social and political creed that would correspond to his personal religion."

Here is a criticism of pacifism which it may be worth our while to consider in connection with the above passage from Drucker:

"If a ruthless government snaps its bloody fingers at every gentle intervention of love and contemptuously carries on its destruction of life, happiness, international co-operation, religion, philosophy and science and the kind of order within which alone love can *do* what it *wills* . . . love, because it is love, will be driven to the last resort that the world supplies." (That is to war.)

The fallacy in this line of reasoning is so apparent to us pacifists that we not only fail to meet it on grounds which our opponents understand, but that we *do* fail in constructive suggestions. There is a real danger that idealists may fail to be practical, scientific, modern. I want to suggest that the

best answer to this line of criticism is a counter-question. Since our opponents continually reason from the individual to the group let us meet them on this ground with a question. Do they (do we) seriously believe that any civilized group we now have organized—the nations, for example, which constituted the League at any time—is incapable of assimilating its own anti-social individuals? I should deny it; I think any nation recognized as civilized is capable of dealing with its gangsters by the sort of methods indicated in this article as the “modern” method of dealing with criminals. There seems to have been a real danger in the U.S.A., but the two nations which our opponents would probably wish to use as examples are Japan and, more especially, Germany. Now if they say that Germany proved incapable of assimilating the Nazis (in which there is a large element of truth), the case for their justification of force seems to me to be worse than on the opposite assumption. For it means that a nation has appeared among us which is dominated by the instincts of criminal lunatics (a fairly large assumption of the whole German people) and that the comity of nations can find no other method of dealing with them than a reversion to those methods which, under the influence of scientific principles, no less than of religious, they have long ago been prepared to set aside as antiquated and out-of-date in the case of individuals.

I would suggest that the correct analysis of the Nazi phenomenon is something like this. A growing number of individuals in Germany were discontented, with the discontent which breeds anti-social conduct, because they found themselves without an outlet. We may agree that among them there were individuals who were depraved and possibly of criminal instincts, but this is not enough to explain the adhesion to the party of a number of decent citizens. The German nation failed to assimilate this group because it, in turn, was surrounded by nation-groups which denied them a full and legitimate outlet. The internal social disorder in Germany is matched by a disorder in the international sphere. At a critical moment the discontent of the Nazi group began to be exploited by the worst elements outside them, the surviving militaristic caste which was the element

in Germany responsible for the last war. One cannot dissociate the social and international problems, and never were they, it seems to me, so closely linked as in Germany.

Nor can we deny the responsibility of our own unredeemed social order in contributing to this state of affairs. As a nation we were not even concerned with putting our own house in order, assimilating the unemployed, and removing the occasion of deep discontents among ourselves, let alone with providing a sound international economic order. A state of economic war and chaos prevailed in the international sphere which had its roots in these absurdities associated with the well-known phenomenon of poverty in the midst of plenty.

Our opponents' case rests on the assumption that war among nations is to be accepted as the norm of international relationships. In the dark ages it was assumed that war between individuals was the norm of human relationships. It is not so long since the assumption that war (in the shape of strikes and lock-outs) was the norm of relationships between industrial groups was tacitly abandoned in our own country; one cannot say positively that such an assumption is dead in all countries.

Our opponents, in a world which is so bankrupt of "statesmanship" that it has produced a second major war within a quarter of a century, seek to cover up their own share of responsibility for this failure by accusing pacifists of a lack of constructive policy and even of being so persuasive in their propaganda that the supposed failure to re-arm is due to their insidious influence. This is the usual form of the argumentum ad hominem. We ourselves, however, need to recognize the truth in the accusation against us of a lack of constructive policy. And surely if we not only fail to secure reconciliation among ourselves (which, being human, we often do), but fail to see the relevance of disorder in social relationships to our task as pacifists, while contenting ourselves with a merely negative condemnation of international war, we lay ourselves open to such a charge.

"This," Drucker says, concluding the passage previously quoted, "is a worse failure for any Christian Church than

even a complete loss of all believers. A church that is only a tiny persecuted minority in a vast sea of atheists might still be strong and successful if it gave its adherents a real community. It would emerge triumphantly as soon as materialism had revealed itself as hollow. That happened in the French Revolution. It might well happen again in Soviet Russia in a generation or two since the tiny minorities who preserve and reform their church form a real community. But a Christian Church which, though strong in numbers and quality of believers, cannot give them more than private religion and private satisfaction, ceases to be a church at all—at least in the sense in which Europe understands the word."

Perhaps the best way in which we can learn to fit ourselves for the task of promoting reconciliation between opposing groups within our own nation is to experiment in the making of community by undertaking the task of promoting reconciliation between ourselves as a group and those from whom we differ. Do we not spend too much time in conferences to encourage each other? True that in these days we badly need the moral support of those of like mind to enable us to carry on in a world at war; but I am sure that we have spent far too little time in seeking conferences with people who are prepared to go much farther along our road than the mere detestation of war which is common to the majority of our fellow-countrymen. There are numbers of people who, while refusing to avow themselves pacifists (partly by reason of a lack of definition of the meaning of the word) nevertheless are painfully conscious of the defects of a social order which has tolerated the class inequalities of the past and the failure of organized governments to provide for the elementary needs of a large number of people, or to give opportunity for work—a place in the community—to those who honestly desire it. The best of us are at times content to accept complacently the activities of a "lady bountiful" as a substitute for facing the cause of human discontents.

While no Christian can neglect or overlook the personal and sinful element in the failure of anti-social individuals to adjust themselves to society, no pacifist who sees our real task as one of reconciliation, must overlook the failure and sinful

element of the environment in which too many individuals have their upbringing. Lord Stamp, in a memorable address some years ago to the British Association, said that our progress in the natural sciences had outstripped our progress in the social sciences. In other words, we are marvellously clever in the creation of machines, but have inadequately learned how to use them socially. But this is a spiritual failure in the *corporate* sphere. No individual takes out a Bren gun and walks down the street slaughtering anyone with whom he has a grievance; it is a corporate responsibility which orders the use of such death-dealing instruments.

There is a passage in Canon Raven's book, *The Gospel and the Church*, which seems to indicate the method we must learn for the reconciliation of rival groups; it is one which we may well learn in seeking reconciliation with those from whom we as a group differ. He is speaking of the new word "agape", the discovery of the early Christian community. He says this signifies a love which will no longer say either "I love you, and, therefore, wish to improve you", or "I love you just as you are, faults and all", but is able to appreciate and enjoy.

The world trouble is not really intellectual but emotional. It is true that our opponents still use arguments which our intellects condemn as futile, as we have just seen. But anyone with experience of a "psychological" individual (I prefer that to the word "neurotic" for the latter implies a diseased condition) knows that such "cases" are given to excuse their anti-social attitude by the most absurd arguments. It is only the real neurotic that cannot be *loved* out of a wrong attitude of mind, hard though it often is to preserve one's patience. And no civilized community is prepared to admit that its deliberate purpose is to treat neurotics as criminals. There is far less difference of opinion about such matters between us and a large proportion of non-pacifists, than we recognize.

The break-down of communism in Russia seems to me to be partly due to the intellectual error involved in its persistent refusal to learn what a true belief in God means. But I should say that it is far more due to the emotional error involved in a failure to love individuals, for mutual love soon necessitates

a recognition of God. There is not space to elaborate this theme but only to point out the ease with which Christianity, with its stress on the value of the individual, may fall into the contrary error of under-estimating the failure of social orders, mistakenly supposed to be Christian because of their nominal recognition of religion. It is simply an obvious fact that groups may be in deadly opposition while various individuals in the opposing groups have something like a real love for each other.

Communism, as we have so far seen it in practice by its avowed exponents, is most sickly sentimental. (For an illustration of what I mean by this I would refer readers to a *History of the Weimar Republic* by Rosenberg, which offers one possible explanation for the failure of the communists in Germany.) Sentimentality is not love. The society we seek must be based on something more virile than sentiment. There is real danger of allowing detestation of war to degenerate into sentiment. No trouble of the social order can be healed by accepting the failures of groups any more than an individual can be reconciled and redeemed by accepting his faults. It is not good enough for us to ignore the failures of our own social order and sentimentally to acquiesce in them.

One last word along the lines of the practical suggestion. Cannot we for the time being satisfy our personal detestation of war in a sharing (and I believe we are most of us ready for this) of the nation's sufferings? Then, can we make more opportunities to draw together those who are of like mind as to the need for a better and more lasting social order? An unofficial publication of the Presbyterian Church puts forward certain proposals for informing its congregations of the facts of the "present industrial order and the stresses and strains endured by Christians who find themselves incorporated in an organization not baptized into Christ".

The time has come when every Christian in his occupation will have to ask himself how far his job is compatible with the mind of Christ. A Church ready for adventure might seek re-organization of itself on something like a corporative model, drawing together those engaged in the same jobs to determine how the job can be made more consistent with Christian practice. The preliminary to this is surely

preparation of ourselves by a realistic facing of the facts, and a wider acquaintance with facts.

I do not want us to shirk our missionary task by the escapist excuse that war is no time for pacifist propaganda. Rather do I at all times mistrust propaganda; and some pacifists do far too much of it; they find an outlet for their unredeemed belligerence in this method of warfare. Our task is one which I see rather as a commending of ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. No one with deep conviction has need to be a propagandist; it is surely not the way of Christ. Our own countrymen at least are more ready than we dare to dream for an application of the psychological methods which are true pacifism, to the reconciliation of opposing groups. Witness, not only the substantial advance in our treatment of criminals, but the group work done in the industrial world in seeking to bring employers and employees together, and even the philosophy of appeasement which, however unfortunate in its application, is believed to have been pacifism!

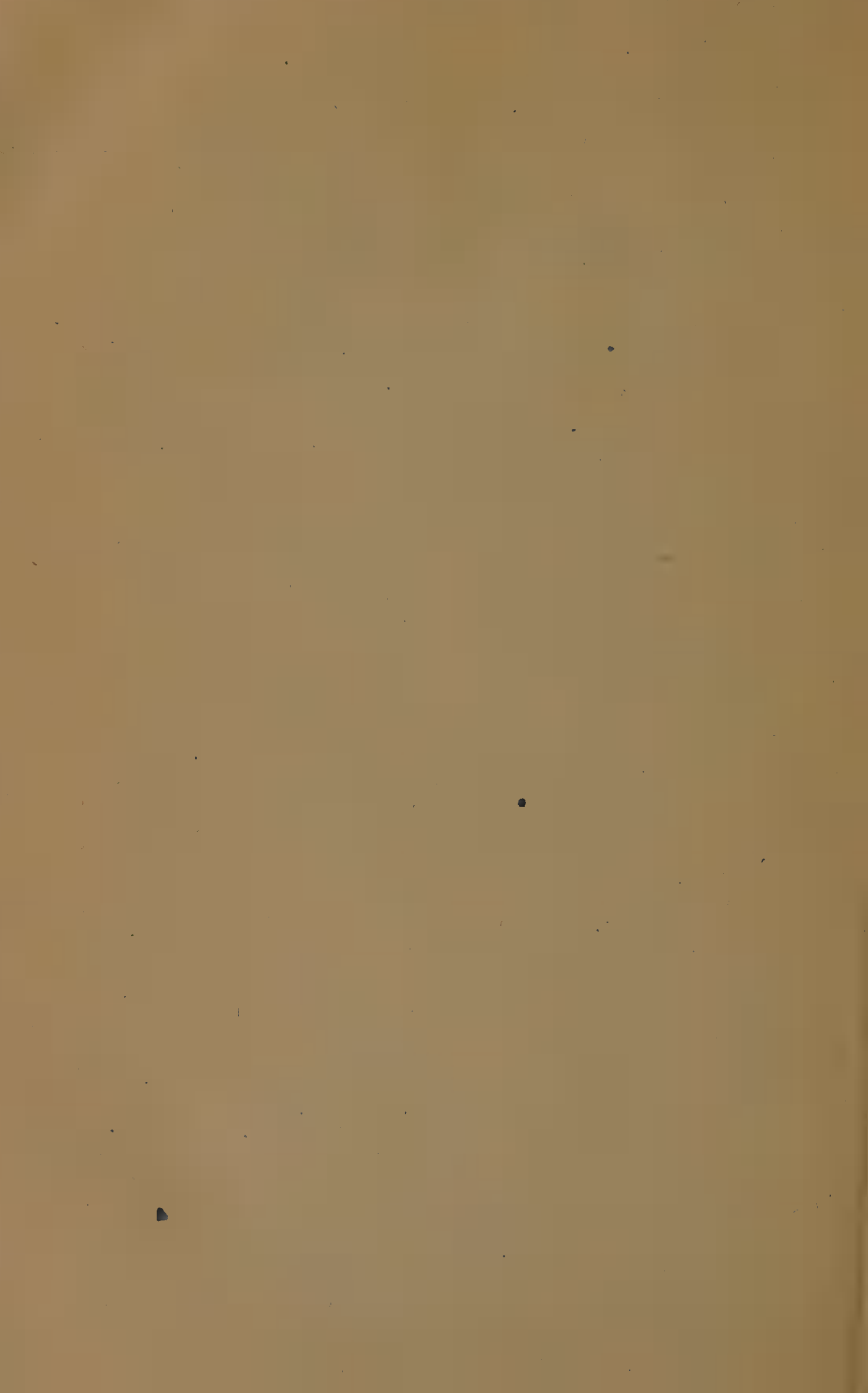
We ourselves have a long way to go before we achieve our Lord's capacity for loving the sinner while reproofing the evil of his heart by sheer force of character. No sincere Christian will fail to recognize His as the true Way of Life, and we can thank God and take courage that there are so many who, because they are not wholly against us, may be counted in on our side.

CHAPTER X
PACIFISM IN THE PARISH

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CHAPTER X

PACIFISM IN THE PARISH

"I BEG leave to enter my most solemn protest against (Dr. Johnson's) general doctrine with regard to the Slave Trade. For I will resolutely say—that his unfavourable notion of it was owing to prejudice, and imperfect or false information. The wild and dangerous attempt which has for some time been persisted in to obtain an act of our Legislature, to abolish so very important and necessary a branch of commercial interest, must have been crushed at once, had not the insignificance of the zealots who vainly took the lead in it, made the vast body of Planters, Merchants, and others, whose immense properties are involved in that trade, reasonably enough suppose that there could be no danger. The encouragement which the attempt has received excites my wonder and indignation: and though some men of superior abilities have supported it; whether from a love of temporary popularity, when prosperous; or a love of general mischief, when desperate, my opinion is unshaken. To abolish a *status*, which in all ages God has sanctioned, and man has continued, would not only be *robbery* to an innumerable class of our fellow-subjects; but it would be extreme cruelty to the African Savages, a portion of whom it saves from massacre, or intolerable bondage in their own country, and introduces into a much happier state of life; especially now when their passage to the West Indies is humanely regulated. To abolish that trade would be to—'shut the gates of mercy on mankind.'"

(Boswell's *Life of Johnson*: Sept. 23, 1777.)¹

"Lord Nelson in a letter addressed to a friend in Jamaica (June 10, 1805), declared himself 'a firm friend of our colonial system' which he was prepared to defend against 'the damnable and cursed doctrine of Wilberforce and his hypocritical allies.'"

(Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*: XI, 609.)

¹ The date given here is that of the day in the account of which these comments occur. The passage must, however, have been written later, and seems to have been written after Johnson's death in 1784.

The passages quoted above may be commended to all who hear and seek to obey the call to stand for pacifism in their parish, and especially to all pacifist parish priests, both as a warning and as an encouragement. The encouragement comes from the knowledge that a cause which such men so derided and abused yet triumphed so soon after their words were spoken. The warning springs from the proof that men of position, reputation, and sense, cannot be expected to see, hear, or acknowledge the plainest truth when it is obscured by a superstitious fog mixed from custom and profit. Nelson's letter was written four months before Trafalgar, when he was forty-seven. Boswell, born in 1740, was about as old when he wrote his piece. Thus both criticisms were made by men of the same age as those who (apart from the sacred limpets who strangle so many parishes) are most influential in our Church Councils. No one, perhaps, will be greatly surprised at Nelson's outburst. The Admiral, writing a private letter to a friend in danger of losing property, may venture a "By gad, Sir!" But Boswell must have felt very strongly that decency was being outraged before he dared so flatly and publicly to contradict his Oracle. His words breathe the very essence of that beautiful, Olympian complacency of the possessing class that we know so well: "This thing is a part of our world; we profit from it and can easily argue that its victims profit too; people in the Bible behaved thus and were not conscious of displeasing God; it is an axiom and a dogma and those who assail it are Eccentrics, Subversives, or (worst of all) Outsiders". And he has not, any more than has Nelson, the very smallest notion that he may be wrong. Both these men were full of the genius which is quick to receive new thoughts, each in his own sphere. Nelson made a new thing of naval warfare by refusing to accept any theory merely because it was old and respectable. Boswell did the same to biography. But outside his own narrow sphere each was, it seems, quite uncritical and ready to condemn unheard any new idea which promised the smallest discomfort.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that in this impenetrability to new ideas Nelson and Boswell were normal men. This is how human beings behave when new truth is offered them. Difference of time, place, or education seems to matter

little in this respect. The Copernican System, the Factory Acts, the Eastward Position, Votes for Women, Daylight Saving—these are only a few of the ideas, now taken for granted by the ordinary man, which at first found him not merely unconvinced, but quite impenetrable. This impenetrability reaches its highest density in officialdom, so that we tend to make it a monopoly of the Military Mind, the Ecclesiastical Mind, the Civil Service Mind, the Trade Union Mind. But we are all its victims, and it is near the surface in those who most highly prize their open and broad minds. We carefully strain out the gnat of (it may be) hatred of foreigners and cheerfully swallow the camel of hatred of (perhaps) Priests, Papists, or Protestants . . . each at a particular moment when immunity is specially difficult. Whenever this impenetrability is backed by emotion it must be treated as absolute, so far as reason is concerned.

Now it must be faced that this state of emotional impenetrability is exactly what faces the pacifist propagandist, clerical or lay, in any parish. The degree of irritation caused by articulate pacifism will vary greatly from time to time and from place to place. One person will be allowed without open protest to shout what another may not whisper. But it is useless to expect that the overwhelming intellectual case for pacifism will win ordinary folk until it can engage their emotions as well. This will not happen until somehow the mass of superstition is discredited and destroyed which still centres on such words as Empire, Sovereignty, and Armaments.

We have to make the effort necessary to realise that the normal citizen of to-day, whatever his intellectual state, is still emotionally close to the ancient Greeks for whom the same word meant both "foreigner" and "enemy". His intellect (and usually his tongue) will assent when the word "madhouse" is applied to the world of competitive armaments and tariff walls. But his intellect is not allowed to stop him accepting the current classification of nations ("Great Powers", "a fifth-rate Power") by a test which reckes of nothing but armaments. His body contains a tiger and a baby as well as a reasoning adult. The first and second unnaturally combine to stifle the third, who is not allowed to proclaim that bombs and battleships are hideous, and arms

competition babyish and ridiculous. The Tiger-Baby has behind it 7,000 years of devoted worship of the Warrior. This Worship will no more be overthrown by pure reason than any other worship in history. In fact, since emotion is engaged against reason, the application of reasoned arguments is likely to produce the same irritation to-day as in the days of Boswell and Nelson.¹

It has been necessary to stress at length this point of the uselessness, even the harmfulness, of mere reasoning about pacifism in the parish of to-day, because this is the point at which in practice the critical decision has to be made, and at which a wrong decision will do very great harm. We see so plainly the utter silliness of armaments, their attendant barbarisms, taboos, and superstitions, and their contradiction of their owners' complacent claim to be "civilized", that it is very hard for us to realise that all this is as impossible of acceptance by ordinary folk to-day as was the wrongness (no more obvious surely) of slavery a hundred and fifty years ago. We are inclined to think we have only to say, "But don't you see, this is just stupid!" for people at once to see our point and join our ranks with shouts of praise. The only result of our painstaking exposition is to cause our hearers to take cover in pained surprise—a position easily and strongly fortified with irritation and personal abuse. This is so when the pacifist exposition is comparatively tactful. Where (as has been known to happen) it is superior and supercilious, the effect is apt to be a good deal more startling. These words are written with a conscience aching at the thought of pulpit lectures given in more than one church during the past twenty years in a spirit which could hardly be expected to do anything but embitter many of the hearers.

A typical result of such treatment occurred in the autumn of 1937, when war fever was not acute. The Vicar preached a "Harvest Sermon" which was certainly not specially pacifist but argued: As the sower trusts God and the Christian trusts God, so man must learn to trust man, and nation to trust

¹ Exactly the same conflict between reason and emotion exists to-day in the matter of aliens. The comfortable patriot who blandly says all foreigners ought to be interned because "However nice they seem, my dear, you never really know" has not the smallest difficulty in excluding the idea that, on that principle, his (or her) own right to continue in freedom might be hard to establish.

nation, or no nation can long survive. As the sermon was ending a man suddenly shouted, "Trust the Devil!" He left the church during the hymn following, and no explanation was ever given. It was possible for the Vicar to strike an attitude of righteous bewilderment. In his next Parish Magazine he wrote: "The interrupter may or may not have had some special nation or nations in mind as unworthy of more trust than the devil. Let him (and others) reflect that if a similar sermon had been preached and similarly interrupted abroad it might well have been ourselves that were compared to the devil. This we know would be absurdly unjust, for WE ARE TRUSTWORTHY. God agrees we are trustworthy, and thinks the same of all other nations". This seems to the writer to be fair and useful comment and to convey a Christian message which was and is greatly needed. But it may be doubted whether, in the actual conditions, it was not largely robbed of its due effect on both the interrupter (if he read it) and most other hearers and readers by the atmosphere in which it was uttered—an atmosphere of debate in which mere intellect was allowed to count too greatly. For some months previously in pulpit and in magazine the Vicar had been beating the pacifist drum in a spirit which was, no doubt, argumentatively effective, but was hardly calculated to win people whose emotions were even then beginning to show signs of inflammation against certain kinds of foreigner. Debating triumphs, as every undergraduate knows, are very sweet. The pacifist priest with debating power is apt to find a very hearty relish in attacking from the heights of Christian pacifism, intellectually impregnable, the Christian militarist position whose defenders, completely bare of intellectual defence, must use instead the dense and tangled masses of superstition and emotion with which the position is so thickly screened. In such a fight remarkable and spectacular triumphs may be won. But they are terribly apt to stop short of any strategic gain and to prove barren and Pyrrhic.

A further caution against any frontal attack on the intellect is imposed, at least on a recently-appointed incumbent, by consideration for the congregation. The priest's duty to proclaim fearlessly God's truth as he sees it is balanced by

his duty to deal gently with the shorn lamb, the smoking flax, and the bruised reed. The congregation who get him as their new leader—usually with very little influence in his choosing—are a living fellowship, built up by many years of sacrificial work of many of the members. To discourage, antagonise, and disperse that fellowship is not hard, especially as many will be looking back wistfully to his predecessor. He cannot hope to avoid offending some. In any congregation at any time some old stagers are on the point of dropping off, and the new Vicar's arrival will shake off a shower of these. And he must not for a moment acquiesce in the claim that he shall say no word that may upset the most reactionary. Yet he will do well to remember that the existing members have their rights, crudely expressed in their grumble against the bird of passage, who perhaps will not stay more than a year or two, but "does nowt but upset our church". The new Incumbent has a priceless charter in the declaration of the 1921 Measure: "It shall be the primary duty of the Council in every parish to co-operate with the Incumbent". His correlative duty is to see that he does not make co-operation unfairly difficult.

This problem of duly considering his people while not being false to his God-given message faces the new Incumbent in other fields, and notably in that of ceremonial. In most of these the strain will be less sharp than in the field of Peace and War. But a line cautiously drawn from a series of conflicts avoided or resolved in other fields perhaps gives the pacifist a parallel which he may fairly use as an encouragement as well as a warning. Most people experienced in parish life will probably agree that WHEN A PRIEST WISHING TO GET HIS PEOPLE TO ACCEPT A NEW THOUGHT OR PRACTICE CAN BACK HIS PLEA NOT ONLY BY INTELLECTUAL ARGUMENT BUT ALSO BY HIS OWN KNOWN CHRISTIAN CHARACTER, HE WILL SECURE A SURPRISINGLY LARGE MEASURE OF RESPECT AND ASSENT.

In his appeal there must be the two elements. To-day (thank God) most churchfolk are unhappy about an appeal which does not satisfy their reason. And though (as we have seen) the logical appeal to the intellect has by itself little effect yet the pacifist case needs the most careful intellectual presentation if it is not to be rejected, whatever the standing of its advocate.

But it must be grasped that the great need for the advocate of pacifism is Christlike character. There is no substitute. Vast numbers of priests (as of layfolk) go through life refusing to believe this and seeking pathetically to make up for the lack of Christian character by making a loud noise or what we hope is a brilliant show. It will not do. Without the Christ spirit our brilliance is at best hard. Only in Christ can we find and pass on that magic blend of certainty with humility which alone will commend our teaching as His. Only in His company can we hope to be free from the arrogance that so easily besets the prophet conscious of his keener insight. It is humbling but it is true that the reason why we pacifist priests do not convert our people to pacifism, is the same that prevents our converting the outsider to Christianity—we are not Christian enough. And the great word that needs to be repeated continually on the theme: "Pacifism in the Parish" is: "The pacifist must be Christian". He cannot allow his life to be self-indulgent and expect his pacifism to be accepted.

The priest, then, who is called by God to proclaim himself a pacifist and to seek to make his people pacifists must all the time put first his own growth in Christian grace and humility. That being assumed, how may he most fruitfully plan his way?

If it is true that we endanger our case by arrogance, then we must seek to present it humbly, with real respect for our hearers, and as fellow-explorers with them. If the broad principle of pacifism is plain to us, yet much is very obscure in its detailed application, which will certainly involve immense difficulties. Our aim must be the aim of all good teachers—not to transfer to the minds before us the exact thoughts that fill our own minds but to help their minds to receive those thoughts (springing from ours but perhaps far more wonderful) which God is offering to them. The distinction is broadly between an attitude of assertion and one of conference.

We shall do well normally to eschew the direct attack of dogmatic statement and to choose the indirect method of conference. "I am telling you where you are wrong" has to be said sometimes. "Let us consider together this difficult problem" will usually be a more hopeful approach. It is the old story of the North Wind, the Sun, and the Travellers'

Cloak. Going back 150 years to the slavery controversy, the better choice is easily discerned. "Slavery is wrong and" (by a simple step) "all slave-owners are devils" may be heroic, and we may wish more parsons had said it. But we may guess ten of such would have done less good than one who, after drawing a simple picture of the African village, asked his hearers: "Is it really God's will that these children of his should be raided by us?" The virtue lies not in the interrogatory form of words, which can be as irritating as any affirmation, but in the true humility of the questioner, who must in fact hope to learn from the conference as well as to teach. A mind open to further truth is as necessary to the innovator as to those he seeks to convince. He who asks others to say: "I never thought of that" must be equally ready to say it himself. Thus parochial conferences on pacifism, whether held in the pulpit, the Vicarage, or elsewhere, must be true conferences and not lectures in disguise.

Given this first condition of humble interrogatory approach to problem and people, there is great scope in our various parishes for variety in tactics. The endless diversity of our parishes socially, intellectually, politically, emotionally and (not least) religiously, is one plain bar to the laying down of rules. Another is the similar diversity among our priests, and a third is the seemingly capricious distribution of pacifist layfolk among the parishes. In all parishes care should be taken that none of these forces are overlooked; sermons, co-operation with Peace Societies, Conference Groups (large and small, systematic and special), the local Press, the Parish Magazine, open-air speaking, gatherings for prayer (in Church or elsewhere), accessibility of the clergy for consultation.

This incomplete list probably shocks the conscience of most Christian priests, certainly the writer's. He wishes here to enlarge on two of its items:

- I. THE PARISH MAGAZINE. As many people have lately said, we have here an instrument capable of vast improvement for our work of evangelisation. It is the writer's firm conviction that a first step to the proper use of the magazine is to deliver it free to every house in the parish. The greater circulation will at once raise the advertisement income high enough to pay the whole cost or even make a

profit. No longer need we pander to popular taste, real or supposed, nor choose our inset for the people whose hardest reading is the serial. And we get much more space for our own message, which gets into far more homes, including some where Christian pacifism will be the thin end of the full Christian wedge.

2. OPEN-AIR SPEAKING. It will hardly be denied to-day that every Christian, ordained or lay, male or female, should be ready to witness for the Faith in the open air. "I am a child, I cannot speak" is no more valid an excuse now than when Jeremiah said it. On the pacifist Christian the duty is urgent, great value attaching to the questions, friendly or hostile, which will be produced.

The writer's practice is to go out every Sunday after Evensong to the Market Place outside his Church, where other speakers then operate, solely to invite questions. This invitation is announced on the Church board and on the cover of the Parish Magazine. The questioning has now gone on (save for holiday months and black-out times) for six years, and lasts for an average time of an hour each Sunday. Apart from its general value this practice is very helpful to the pacifist priest. Whatever the state of the world, he will not be long left without questions on war and peace. Regular weekly cross-examination from many angles will clear his thought and save him from basing his pacifism on any false foundation. It will also enable him to answer publicly the simple errors of the simple militarists—to deal with the half-dozen texts they commonly cite and to dethrone such favourite lay-figures as the Kindly Policeman and the Assaulted Sister. With the certainty that the weekly questioning leaves no possible doubt about his pacifism, he will feel the less bound to ram it down his congregation's throat in each sermon. He will (if the writer's experience gives a guide) also be heartened by the amount of approval his pacifist message will win from the crowd.

In answering questions the writer has of late made it his business to hold up before the crowd a crucifix. That used happens not to be realistic but to represent the Triumphant Christ—a distinction which (while it is not now desired to stress it) has in fact enabled him to answer more easily questions of various kinds. Many questions, both hostile and

enquiring, are less satisfactorily answered with words than with the silent shewing of the crucifix. To hold the visible crucifix will also help the Christian to avoid some of the perils of controversy.

Mention of the crucifix will even now, it is to be feared, repel some good Christians. All will agree, however, that whatever outward marks of his faith a Christian may carry, he will neither serve the Master nor spread the Gospel unless his inward life and character is every day more plainly marked with the Cross. This is very notably true to-day of the Christian pacifist. Pacifists vary and parishes vary. But every pacifist in every parish must increasingly be, and be seen to be, a close friend of the living Saviour. With this saving friendship, pacifism in the parish is a glorious and triumphant progress.

This thought is offered for the encouragement of layfolk who find themselves isolated pacifists in their parishes. It is very easy and excusable for such people to feel hopeless about the parish, and even about the Vicar, and to look round for another Church in which they may hope to be more at ease. While no doubt this is sometimes God's will, it is humbly suggested that normally we are called to stay where we are and be used by God to convert others. A lay person known to be a pacifist must (like the pacifist priest) take special care to be so plainly a friend of God that the enemy have no chance to blaspheme. Such a one will, where conscience does not forbid, take great trouble to support the Vicar loyally, to be known as a regular and devout communicant, and to support the weekday worship and special war-time prayers. Valuable chances will occur of co-operation with other people concerned for peace, both singly and in groups, outside one's own Church as well as within it. Grace will be sought to avoid that odious spirit of the supercilious heresy-hunter which seems rather easily to possess the fighter for peace. Above all we shall seek always to remember that our "isolation" is, at the worst, that of the explorer and the missionary, and that we have always with us the Captain of our Salvation, the Prince of Peace.

POSTSCRIPT

By

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POSTSCRIPT

PACIFISM has been considered from many points of view in these pages, and its implications in many departments of life discussed. Now at the end it is perhaps worth while to dwell for a moment on the one thing about it which matters supremely: its relation to the total Christian revelation of God's nature as absolute love, and of His purpose, as the redemption of the created order by the operation of that absolute love. For pacifism is only on safe ground where it is based on and embodies these eternal principles; and is seen, not in isolation as an attitude towards the particular problem of war, but as part of the great task committed to humanity—the bringing forth of eternal life in the midst of time, or the setting up of the Kingdom of God. The doctrine of non-resistance is after all merely a special application of the great doctrine of universal charity; and it is of the utmost importance that pacifists should escape from their own little paddock and realise this. The fact that so many pacifists felt obliged to abandon the absolute position when the present war increased in intensity and disclosed to us the full possibilities and results of military defeat, shows how few had really based their convictions on these eternal principles, how much expediency was still mingled with their faith. Many were found willing when it came to the point to cast out Satan by Satan, rather than accept the awful risk inherent in the unlimited application to life of the doctrine of Christian love—that national or personal crucifixion which may be the reward of absolute trust in the power of the Divine Charity, and absolute surrender to its claims.

Since all Christians are now agreed on the wrongfulness and wastefulness of war, even though they may in particular instances believe themselves compelled to wage it, acquiescence in this supposed necessity can only mean capitulation to expediency and defective confidence in God. True pacifism is one expression among many of this complete confidence, of that belief in the power and priority of the supernatural

order which is the backbone of religion; and without such belief, it cannot long endure. It is a courageous affirmation of Love, Joy and Peace as ultimate characters of the real world of spirit; a refusal to capitulate to the world's sin and acquiesce in the standards of a fallen race. Therefore in a fallen, or rather a falling world—for the Fall is something which is happening all the time, man is always slipping away from his right relation to God, and from sacrifice to self-centredness—absolute pacifism, which means an uncompromising obedience to the utmost demands of charity, is impossible except as an effect of grace. The pacifist is one who has crossed over to God's side and stands by the Cross, which is at once the supreme expression of that charity and the pattern of an unblemished trust in the Unseen. Thence, with eyes cleansed by prayer, he sees all life in supernatural regard; and knows that, though our present social order may crash in the furies of a total war and the darkness of Calvary may close down on the historic scene, the one thing that matters is the faithfulness of the creature to its own fragmentary apprehensions of the law of charity and its ultimate return to that tranquillity of order, which is a perfect correspondence with the steadfast Will of God. His pacifism, then, is a judgment on existence. It is rooted in God and can only maintain itself by that contemplation which St. Gregory called the "vision of the principle". It is not a practical, this-world expedient for getting the best results from our human situation; though indeed it is true that no other ordering of our existence can produce the best results.

All this seems remote from the life that now rages round us. Yet there is a sense in which Christianity, whilst entering so deeply into our sinful experience, has always stood over against it; proclaiming other standards, refusing to acquiesce in human methods and aims, never promising quick results, comfort or this-world success. "In the world ye shall have tribulation" said the Johannine Christ to His bewildered followers as He moved towards the apparent defeat of the Cross, "but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world". Or, in Dr. Temple's version, "I have conquered the Universe". Here is the true charter of Christian pacifism, in the

declaration of One who has conquered the rebel universe at its heart by letting violence do its worst, triumphing over principalities and powers by the costly application of sacrificial love:¹ and now, for the final completion of that victory in His "outlying provinces", requires the selfless co-operation of men.

So once more true pacifism discloses itself as a supernatural vocation, a bringing of ultimate truth into the world of time, demanding of those who embrace it unlimited faith, unshakable hope, inexhaustible charity. For it means complete and confident self-giving to the methods and purposes of God; a break with human prudence and the gospel of safety first. It is a positive and creative direction for living, poised on the unseen future; and involves much more than the mere repudiation of war. War is sin worked out to its inevitable conclusion in violence, hatred, greed and mutual mistrust: part of a deeper disharmony, a split between the whole created order and the Divine Charity, an orientation of life towards self satisfaction, national or personal, and away from God. Thus even the most just of wars implies a movement away from Christ, from His spirit, method and aims; but peace is one point in the Church's great effort to "restore all things in Him". Wars and fightings, says St. James, are always suspect in origin. They arise from "your pleasures that war against your members. Ye lust and have not: ye kill and covet and cannot obtain. Ye fight and war. Ye have not because ye ask not. Ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures".²

War, then, is the material expression of spiritual sin, the deflection of the great powers of initiative, the great control of our physical resources, which have been entrusted to us from serving God's purpose to accomplishing our own. Its causes are rooted in possessiveness, in inordinate desire—the frenzied clutch on what we have, the desperate grab at what we have not. But Christianity, considered as a clue to life's meaning, has no more interest in the clutch than in the grab. From first to last it urges detachment from possessions, and will only impart its deepest secrets to those who are willing to leave all. It does not merely regulate possessiveness, but

¹ Col. ii. 15.

² James iv. 1-3.

transcends it. Its response to greed is generosity. "If any would take away thy coat let him have thy cloak also."¹ Don't stand on your rights, or defend your own. You have nothing of your own—all is God's.

In the unseen fastnesses of the spiritual world, the devil and his angels—spirits separated from God—fight for their own; and the reflection of that hidden struggle is war and conflict on earth. It is a losing fight, for they struggle against the slow inexorable process of God's triumph, the setting up of His Kingdom; and in that Kingdom, "the I, the Me, the Mine" has no meaning. "All is ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's." "Who made me a judge and divider over you?" said Our Lord to the heir concerned to get his just rights. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."² It consists in the fulness and purity of his relation with God, the source of all life: and here that which is true of the single soul is also true of the group. Christianity as such, therefore, is not concerned to enforce social or national justice as man understands it, but aims beyond social and national justice, at that pure liberty of the glory of the Children of God³ which dissolves all disharmonies in Charity. Only in a world where the whole of this vast programme is accepted can we hope that peace will be maintained.

This means that pacifism, which is a particular expression of Christian love in action, looks inwards to the very source of life and out towards its future. It works for the future, but cannot expect its triumphs now. Nevertheless it is of crucial importance that those to whom its truth has already been revealed, and who have learned to say, without conditions "Ours" instead of "Mine", should not be disobedient to the heavenly vision; however great the present cost of obedience may be. "God," says the Abbe de Tourville, "sows in the world, at every epoch, precursors who assume or know, at least inwardly, things that are to come. We should bless God if we happen to be forerunners; even though, living a century or two too soon, we may find ourselves strangers in a foreign land. . . . Rejoice then in the light that you have been given, and do not be surprised that it is so difficult to

¹ Matt. v. 40.

² Luke xii. 14, 15.

³ Rom. viii. 21.

pass it on to others. It really is making its way—not so much through you or me, as through force of circumstance.”¹

Pacifists, I am sure, should take these words to themselves, and be content to count themselves in this sense as precursors. Born into a European world so concluded in sin, so infected by suspicion, variance and greed, that as yet the temper of peace is impossible to it, they must await with patience the gradual triumph of God’s Will; never forgetting that the vision of peace, of which we now begin perhaps to see the first faint glimmer, is simply one aspect of the total Christian vision of the world transfigured in Christ, irradiated by charity, for which “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together till now”.² The true significance of the repudiation of war can only be understood when seen in this larger context of the conquest of sin and the bringing in of the Kingdom of God.

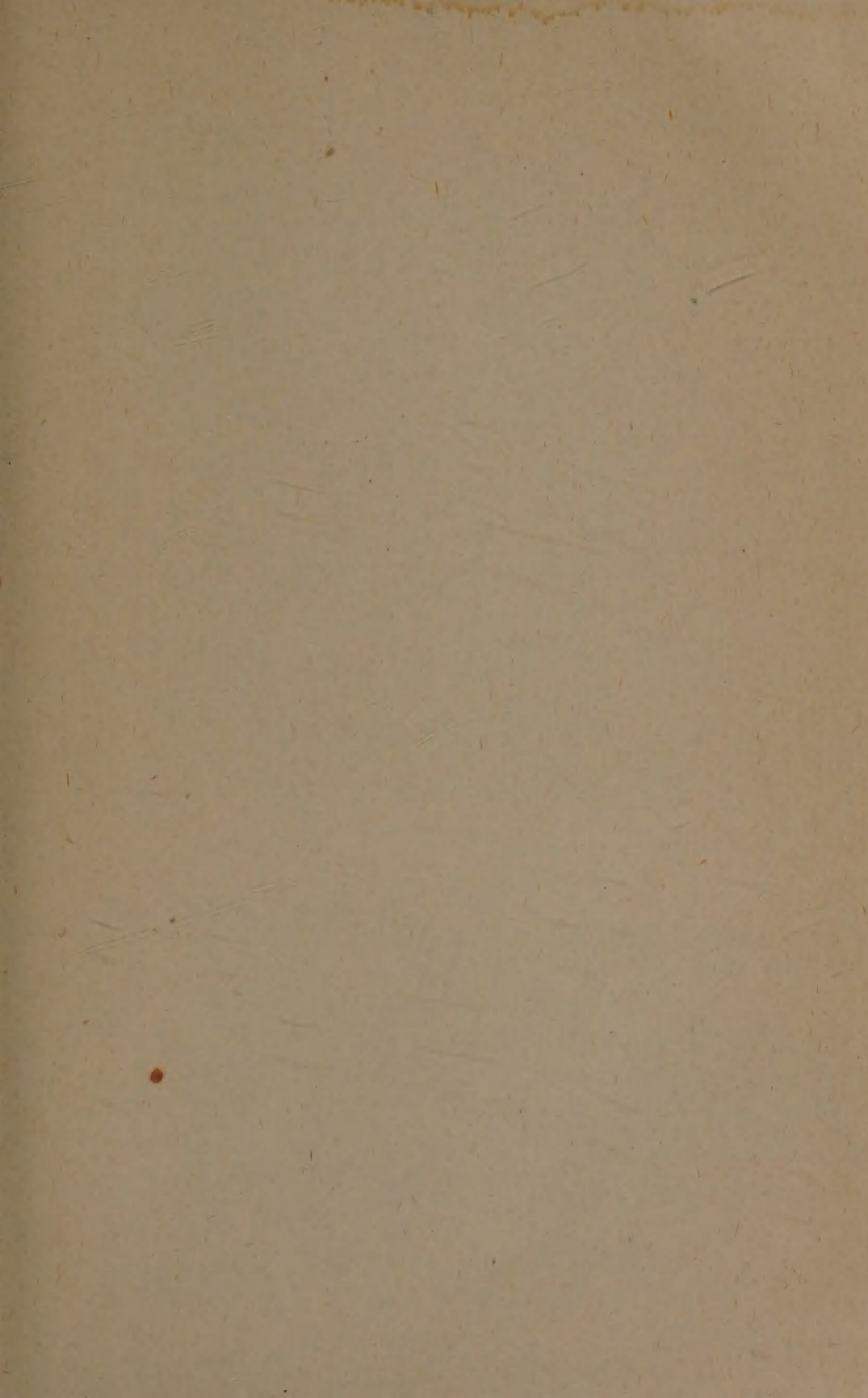
That rich harmonious life, of which peace is one vital character among many, exists in its wholeness at a level where the natural man cannot as yet maintain himself. Indeed there is no reason why natural man should abjure conflict, unless he is potentially spiritual man and therefore subject to the law of charity. The pacifist then, must be content to begin where he is; not by large general denunciations of war, convincing “proofs” of its folly and sin, but rather by quietly accepting his own place in a sinful order and there creating around himself a little pool of harmony and love. The home, the street, the workplace, the city should be his first, perhaps his only sphere. The establishment of cells of tranquillity in a world at war should be a primary pacifist aim and is one of the best ways of promoting the temper of peace. “The servant of the Lord must not strive.” The pacifist who stoops to controversy is by that very act setting up a new centre of conflict, and decreasing the peacefulness of the world. But to live in quietness with those whose opinions or actions we detest is a manifest victory for the tranquil Spirit of God, and a sovereign means of bringing His Kingdom in. Nor need we too hurriedly assume that those with whose convictions we disagree most completely have nothing to contribute to His hidden purpose; that there will not in the

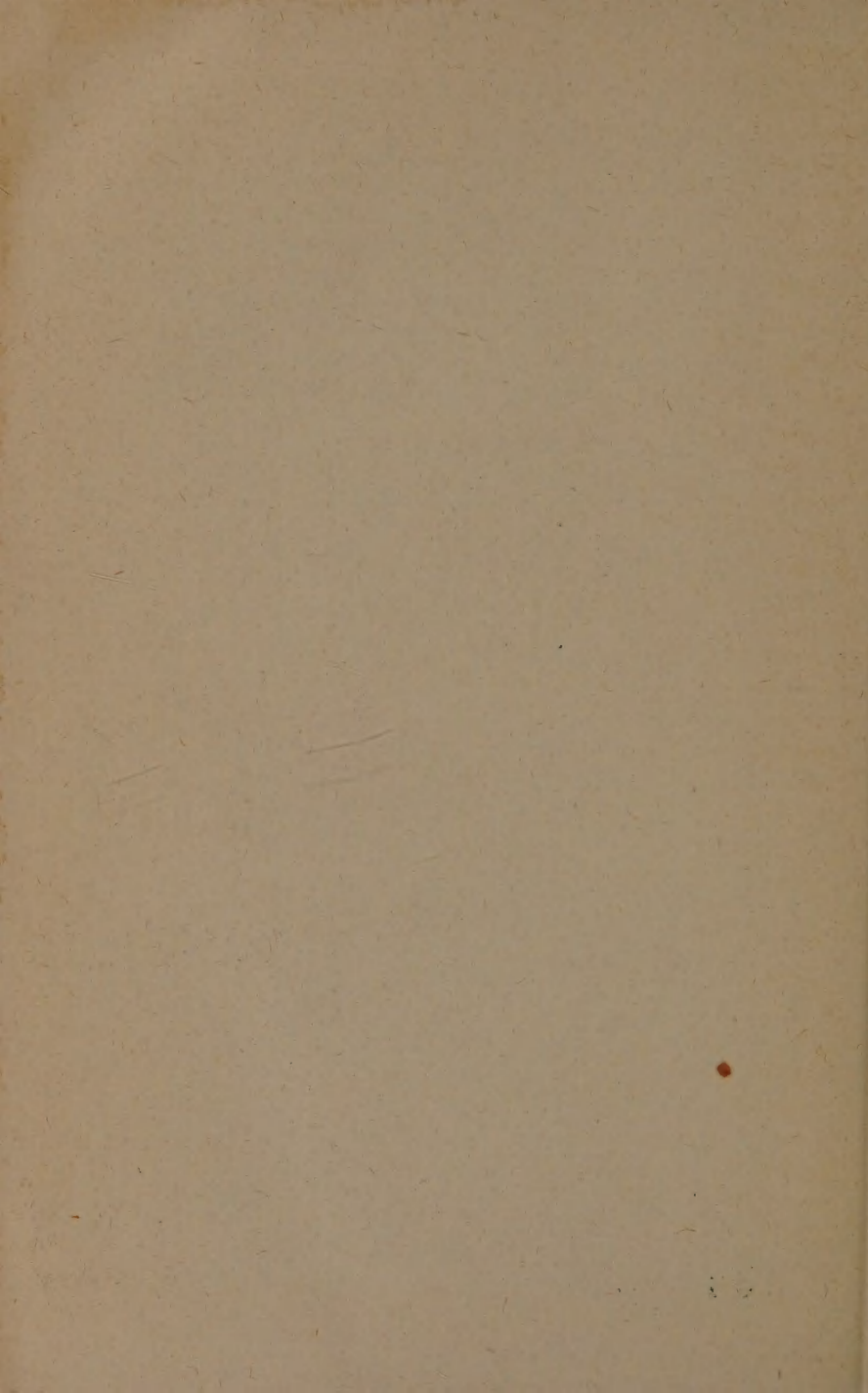
¹ De Tourville, *Pensées Diverses*, p. 29.

² Rom. viii. 22.

end be a welcome for the lion as well as for the lamb. It is as well to realize that some who cannot share our particular outlook, whose minds are closed to our little bit of truth, may yet be open to other realities no less essential to the establishment of that total Kingdom in which love, joy and peace are three aspects of a single beatitude. God, said the great Nicolas of Cusa, dwells "beyond the coincidence of contraries". There perhaps, united within the living peace which passes understanding, the Christian warrior and the Christian pacifist may find themselves at one.

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Hartill, Percy, 1892- ed.

Into the way of peace, by communicants of the English church, edited by Percy Hartill ... New York city, The Fellowship of reconciliation, 1942,

ix p., 1 l., 13-102 p. 204^{cm}.

CONTENTS.—The suffering servant of the Lord, by Kenneth Rawlings.—The gospel basis of pacifism, by C. P. Gliddon.—The idea of the just war, by D. D. A. Lockhart.—The philosophy of Christian pacifism, by Percy Hartill.—Unity: sacramental and fundamental, by the late Natalie Victor.—Prayer for peace, by G. S. Shaw.—The church's duty and opportunity, by J. M. Murry.—Pacifism and reunion, by C. E. Raven.—Pacifism and social reform, by F. E. A. Shepherd.—Pacifism in the parish, by T. B. Scrutton.—Postscript, by Evelyn Underhill.

I. Peace. 2. Pacifism. I. Fellowship of reconciliation (United States) II. Title.

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